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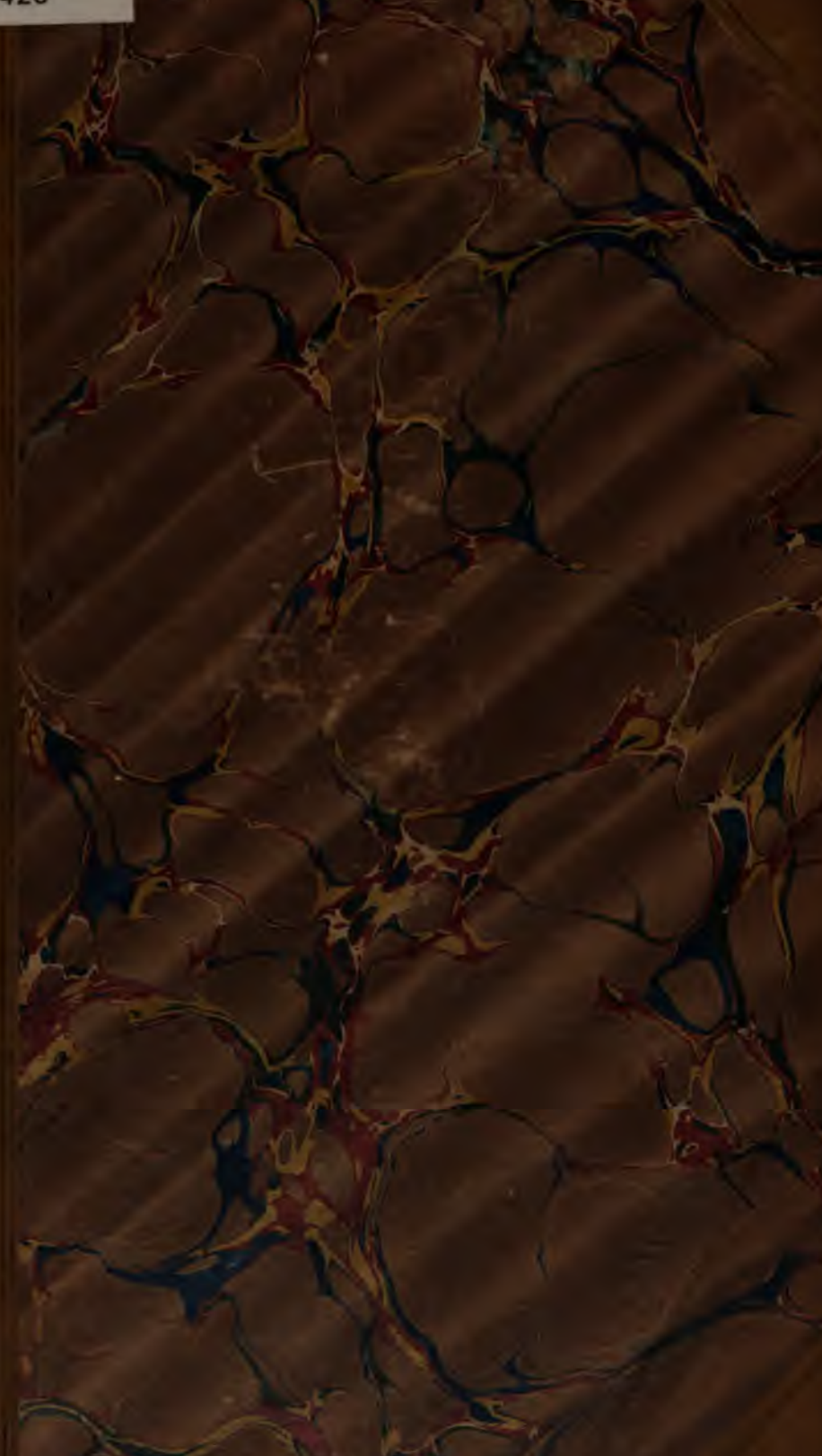
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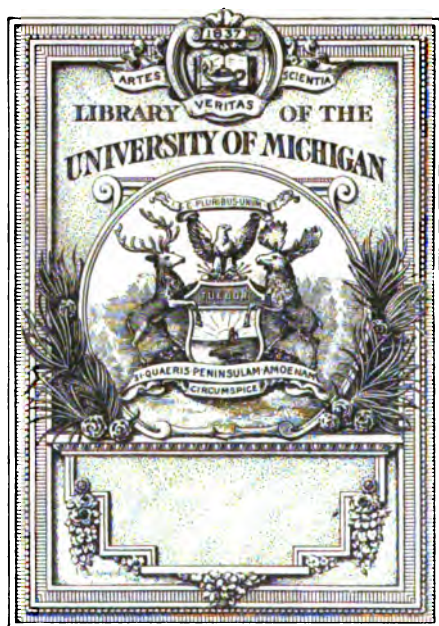
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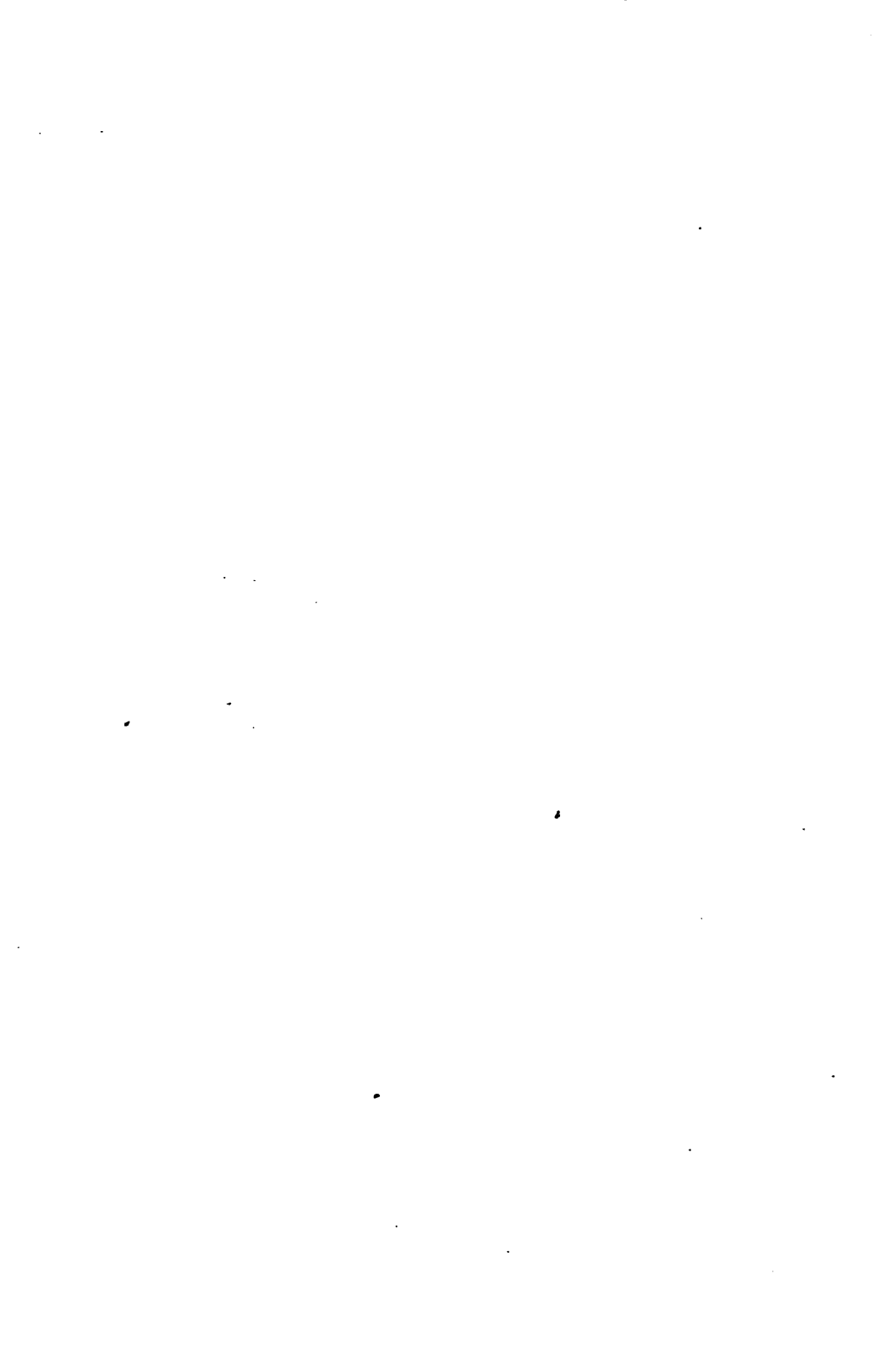




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LONDON SOCIETY.

An Illustrated Magazine

OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

THE HOURS OF RELAXATION.

VOLUME XVII.

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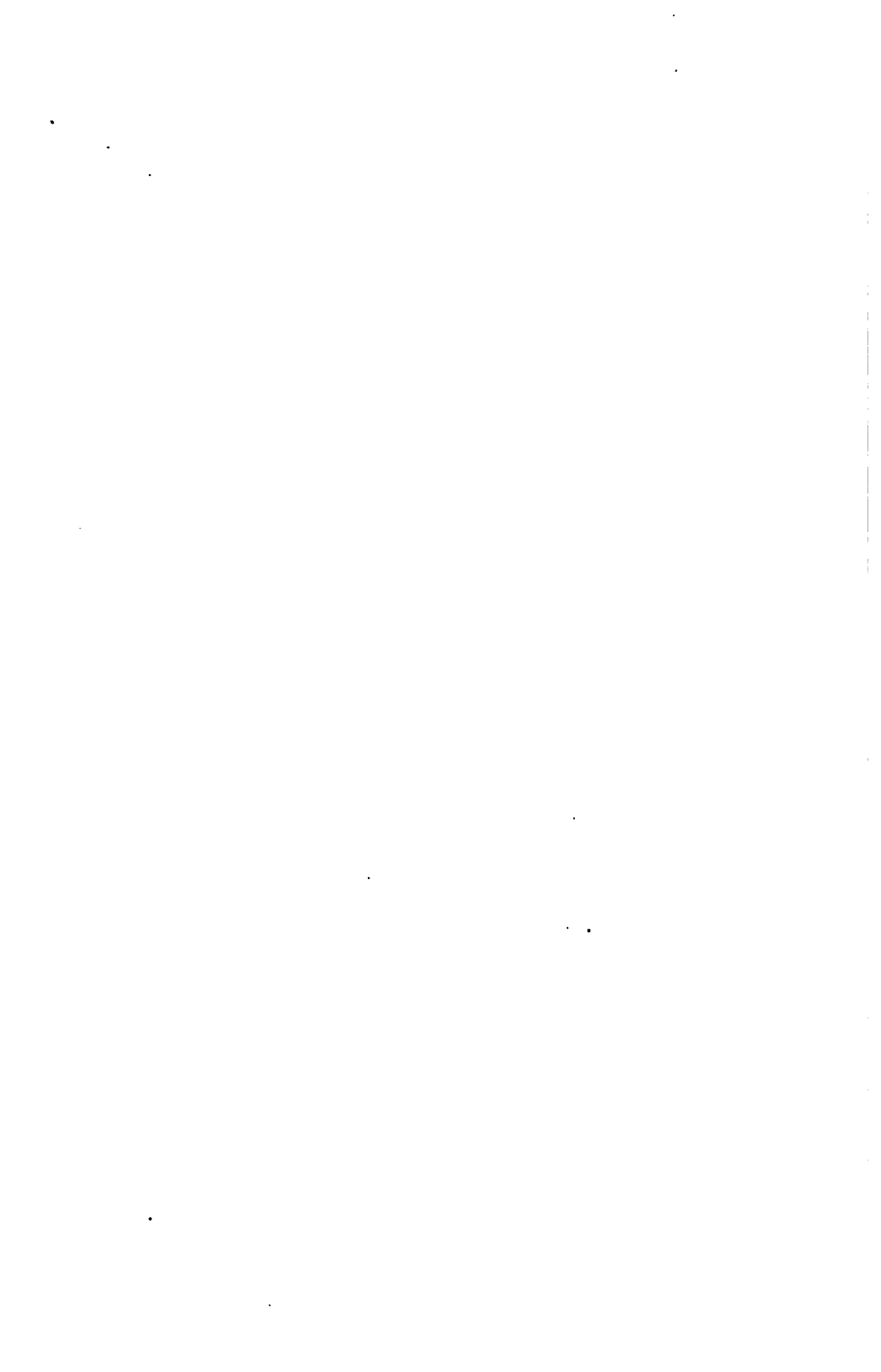
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LONDON SOCIETY.

JANUARY, 1870.



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See 'Maaks and Mysteries,' page 22.

RIDDLES OF LOVE.

CHAPTER I.

OF CAPTAIN PEMBERTON AND HIS DAUGHTER AND THEIR POSITION IN SHUTTLETON SOCIETY.

TOO much praise can scarcely be given to those who visit the sick, seeing what a trouble most of us find it to visit the healthy. May Pemberton not only underwent the severer test of the two, but per-
VOL. XVII.—NO. XXVII.

formed a thousand kind acts for the poor of the neighbourhood, to whom she was a more practical friend than you would consider possible in a Lady Bountiful of such very limited means. Other ladies, who were as

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bent upon being benevolent with far superior resources, found it impossible to keep pace with her. For a good genius seemed to follow May wherever she went in her ministrations. Her sick people always became sound, and her merely poor people mostly managed to tide over their troubles—getting work in the worst seasons, and paying up landlords who would not wait any longer, and bakers who said that ~~not~~ another loaf should they have, in a most miraculous manner. As for any school that she took in hand, the children simply became, in the course of a month, as near an approach to angels as can be achieved by cleanliness of faces and hands, the opportune employment of the pocket-handkerchief, and extraordinary attention to the preliminary ~~game~~ of education. The ladies who did not succeed so well said it was ~~her~~ luck—in words at least to that effect—and so I suppose it was, though what luck may really be is a separate question which I will not here venture to discuss.

Doing good, as you may gather from the above, was fashionable in Shuttleton at the time to which I refer—only a few years back—and really there was quite room for any good that it was possible to do. For Shuttleton belonged to a manufacturing district, and the staple of the particular industry got scarce at times, and then employment got scarce, and the ‘hands’ considered themselves fortunate if they could so far keep their feet as to become scarce also, and plentiful somewhere else. The aristocracy of the place—principally belonging to the manufacturing interest—had not always been careful in looking after popular wants. There had been a run in favour of frivolity and heartlessness a few years before; for new aristocracies are wonderfully like the old in their defects, except that they seldom manage to misconduct themselves so well—their improprieties being usually wanting in that grace and flower which comes from the hereditary habit of doing as one pleases. There had been for many years past a regiment quartered close to the town—generally of

dragoons, whose utility in preference to infantry at times when distress takes an embarrassing form is well appreciated by mayors and magistrates. The officers had naturally personal advantages over most of the local people; and although elderly gentlemen among the latter who had ‘made themselves’ (out of ragged boys) professed to look down upon their military neighbours as weak in character and not always strong in cash, the latter had, of course, plenty of allies among the other sex, and were simply spoiled. The younger manufacturing interest, too, who had not made themselves, but found themselves ready made, were also favourably inclined to the officers, whose acquaintance they cultivated with a warmth which was a forcing process certainly—but then the plant was an exotic. The consequences were a few scandals in which the military may have been most to blame, but the manufacturers were certainly most disgraced; so for some years the garrison was cut by the more discreet—of course the majority—of the townspeople, and serious benevolence came into fashion, as we have seen.

Not that May Pemberton merely followed the fashion. The scandals had occurred long before her father had settled in the neighbourhood, and in doing good she simply obeyed the first instinct of her nature. Her father was a captain in a foot regiment, who had lost his money, could not win his promotion, and so had gone upon half pay. And being old for his rank—at any rate among the new generation of his comrades in arms—as well as delicate in health, he might fairly be considered as laid upon the shelf. He was a man saddened, too, by domestic troubles, though nobody quite knew what they were; but it was said that he had been separated from his wife some years before the supposed death of that lady.

Captain Pemberton’s half pay must have been more than usually expansive if he had nothing of his own to add to it; for the captain managed to live respectably enough

—in an old house a short distance from the town, somewhat dilapidated, like himself, and with the remains of something better about it, like himself also. But as he did not entertain his neighbours, and could not be considered a rising man, he did not meet with much attention from the society proper of the place, who recognised his daughter rather on the common ground of doing good, than in the light of a private friend. Among the country people—had Captain Pemberton gone among them—his status as an officer and a man of family would have insured recognition. But the good people of Shuttleton had no notion of a military man who did not belong to an actual regiment, and who was not to be seen at least sometimes with his sword under his arm or clattering aggressively on the pavement, who would not attend their private dinner parties in his shell-jacket, and their public balls in the glitter of his full dress. Above all, they did not believe in a military man who, being without a wife, was not on the cards to marry one of their daughters. For I should explain that at the period at which I write the garrison was fast being forgiven for its former faults; and even the good works in vogue were not considered incompatible with pleasant and advantageous society. There were two reasons, I take it, for the change: time in the first place, and in the second place the substitution for a cavalry regiment of a battalion of infantry. All officers are wicked in the eyes of respectable people of the Shuttleton stamp, but infantry officers are somehow not considered so wicked as cavalry officers. Why it is, I know not, since a horse cannot be supposed to demoralize his master; but at any rate the Shuttletonians seemed to look upon the change as an occasion for compromise, and at the time to which I refer were burying the hatchet of strife and covering it up with the earth of oblivion.

The new feeling, however, did not much concern the captain. He was quite a match for the Shuttletonians in point of pride. Although he re-

ceived a certain share of the local civilities he availed himself very sparingly of the amnesty accorded to his class. He was a saddened man, as I have said, and moreover he had views of his own, which were rather old-fashioned, about grades of society, and remembered in his day, when he was a man of the *mode*, that people like the Shuttletonians were not received in his circles. So, beyond the range of the officers of the local regiment, he saw very little society; and his daughter, you may be sure, saw less. For women feel the embarrassment of a false position more than men, if only in the matter of milliner's bills—compared with which those of tailors

'Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine;'

—and ladies, although they may have dozens of dresses in which they look respectively lovely, have never the precise dress required for appearance upon any particular occasion.

CHAPTER II.

AN IMPORTANT ADDITION TO SHUTTLETON SOCIETY.

You have heard so much about May Pemberton and her father that it is quite time you made their personal acquaintance. Here is an excellent opportunity, while they are seated at breakfast in a little room opening upon a large garden, and discussing the contents of a letter which has just been received by post. As there are no other persons present you may easily distinguish between the two. The young lady so perfectly but plainly dressed in the freshest of morning muslin, with the abundant chestnut hair, deep blue eyes, and the clearest possible complexion, is of course May. The gentleman of middle age, with hair inclining to grey, aquiline profile, and soft, somewhat sad, smile, is of course Captain Pemberton.

The letter under discussion is written in one of those unmistakably ladylike hands which seem made up of spiders' legs. It is evidently addressed to May, who is

reading it with her face lit up with mingled interest and amusement, and making her comments upon it as she proceeds.

'Lucy is just as careless as ever,' she remarked, referring to her correspondent. 'Her letter is dated last week, but does not seem to have been posted until just before she was to leave Cheltenham; so unless she has changed her plans in the meantime she will be here to-day. However, unless her extra year at Minerva House has made her a very different person from what she was when I was there, I need not expect her until she makes her appearance.'

May made this little bit at her old schoolfellow in the purest good nature; but she was not justified in her anticipations of delay, for while she was speaking wheels were heard on the private road which led to the house, a wagonette stopped at the gate, out of which leapt a young lady, evidently in an unrestrainable state of animal spirits, who, pushing past the timid servant with a hasty 'Oh, say Miss Cartwright,' dashed at once into the house and announced herself.

May and her friend had an embrace of no ordinary character, and it was only after at least two minutes and a half of intense rapture that the visitor perceived the presence of a third person. She was then abashed for the space of about half a minute, after which she was in excellent form for the inevitable introduction to Captain Pemberton. Three minutes after she was talking to that gentleman as if she had known him for twenty years.

'You know all about me from May, of course,' she said, after a great deal of irrelevant matter. 'We were such friends, you know, at Minerva House, and we mean to be such friends always, don't we, dear?'

Here came another embrace of May, and Miss Cartwright's feelings seemed so overflowing that the captain thought his turn was certainly coming next. And with very little encouragement on his part I really think it would.

'You know, of course, that they have made papa mayor,' continued the young lady, who monopolised almost the entire conversation, and talked with an irrelevance as to subject matter for which she seemed to have an especial talent. 'Oh, yes, that was six months ago. But isn't it nice? And mamma is mayoress, of course. She is so proud, and in such an awful rage with papa when he talks in his old way of when he came into Shuttleton without any hat, and no boots to speak of, and only three-halfpence in his pocket. As if there was anything remarkable in that. All the people who come into places with only three-halfpence in their pockets always make large fortunes. It must be something in the three-halfpence I suppose. The unfortunate people who have twopence or threepence never get on. But you would be so amused to hear papa on the subject, now he is mayor—only you have heard him, of course, for the last six months.'

The Pembertons were not very familiar with this weakness on the part of Mr. Cartwright, who, as the reader will gather from the above, was one of the 'self-made men' of Shuttleton, having, from the position of a 'hand' in a cotton mill become one of the largest proprietors in the place; but they laughed at the picture given by the young lady of her honoured parent, and could not choose but be almost as hilarious as herself.

'Yes, I arrived last night,' pursued Miss Cartwright—I may as well call her Lucy at once—apropos of nothing; 'and of course dashed over to see my dear friend immediately'—(here came another embrace of May and another unrealized expectation on the part of her father)—'and what are we going to do? It is still absurdly early, only half-past ten o'clock' (the latter assertion was made on the authority of a lovely little watch which, after putting it to its proper use, the speaker twisted round her finger carelessly, by means of the chain which she held in her hand, winding it close and then unwinding it by a contrary action, with the utmost contempt for its interior economy). 'In the

first place, though, I must go home, for it will not do to leave papa and mamma; so you will come, May dear, and spend the day with me; and you'—(she hesitated in addressing Captain Pemberton, not in any embarrassment, but with an air which gave you the idea that she did not know whether to call him Tom, or Dick, or Harry)—'and you, you will come and spend the day also.'

Captain Pemberton laughed at the idea of his going to spend the day with his interesting young friend, and pleaded a prior engagement with as much gaiety as he could command. He had promised, he said, to take lunch at the mess, and he was afraid that he would be wanted for whist in the afternoon.

'Well, perhaps we shall be better without you after all,' said the young lady, who, like a great many good-natured persons, had a wonderful faculty for consoling herself for the absence of friends; 'for I want to talk to May about the great ball which papa is giving at the Town Hall—you have had the cards, of course—and to get her advice as to what I'm to wear. It's very difficult to get ball-dresses on short notice.'

The captain gravely assented, and thought he remembered instances in which it had been difficult to get those indispensable articles even on long notice. But he did not make unpleasant remarks.

The end of this important meeting was that May was taken possession of, placed in the wagonette, and became the personal property of her affectionate but dictatorial friend for the rest of the day.

CHAPTER III.

A STILL MORE IMPORTANT ADDITION TO SHUTTLETON SOCIETY.

There was no peace in Shuttleton from the day of Lucy's arrival, that is to say, to the extent of that young lady's influence upon the society of the place, and it was not her fault if that influence was wanting in any way. May was very fond of her friend; but impulsive people just

arrived from distant and facetious places make sad havoc with your ordinary arrangements, and May was allowed no time to attend to her duties either in doors or out. Her father fortunately was not exacting, and liked to see his daughter amused; but May had an idea that he was helpless in her absence, and would perish miserably if left to his own resources for any unusual period. Then there was the sick people and the poor people upon whom she bestowed her ministrations. What would become of them if she were continually made to go out in that eternal wagonette upon prodigal missions to shops and vivacious visits to private houses filled with persons whom she knew nothing about? Lucy took a practical view of her objections. As for the sick, the best thing to do for them, in her opinion, was to send them a doctor; and as for the poor, the best thing to do for *them* was to send them money, of course. And as far as concerned the latter sinew of war it was at May's disposal. But Lucy insisted that she must not be troubled about its bestowal. She did not care who had it, in fact, but there it was if it was wanted. This was not quite in accordance with May's idea of doing good, for she had not arrived at the point of some charitable ladies, who lay their indifferent friends under contribution for all kinds of fancy philanthropy without remorse. But she bore up against the invasion with all the grace at her command, and did good by stealth without any chance of blushing to find it fame. She was not altogether unimflunenced, too, by the strong demonstrations of her determined friend, her own strength being—as we shall see in the course of our narrative—of a different kind, and all the more potential for being restrainable. As Lucy remarked in the course of some minor combats between them, in which Miss May gained the advantage without seeming to do so, 'There is no knowing how to take these quiet people—they do just as they please with one, and one is a mere puppet in their hands.' Miss Lucy was so accustomed to pull the strings at

home, and place her papa in any position she pleased, that the smallest hitch in the machinery out of doors seemed to be quite unnatural, and a thing to be resented. How they managed her at Minerva House I am not in a position to say; but if all the other young ladies resembled her in despotic ideas of independence, that respectable establishment must have been in a chronic state of siege.

One day—two days after her arrival—she came over to the Pembertons, in the eternal wagonette, with an idea about the impending ball—something connected with a special quadrille in which she wished May to take a part—and after having developed her views with characteristic ardour, took her friend away to put the project in train. This important business involved a great deal of going about to shops, and then the two young ladies went to lunch at the mayor's house, a large bleak-looking mansion, painfully new and clean, situated in a square equally new and clean, and apparently the scene of an active competition among the residents as to who should have the whitest steps and the brightest knockers.

When the young ladies entered the hall the servant told Lucy that there were some gentlemen in the drawing-room. Lucy, who took an abstract interest in the sex, eagerly inquired their names. She was told 'Mr. Richard Hargrave and a strange gentleman that he had brought with him—a very grand-looking gentleman,' added the girl.

Mr. Cartwright, by the way, was quite rich enough to have his hall-door opened by a couple of powdered footmen; but those ornamental accessories do not seem to flourish in manufacturing towns.

The information about the visitors was quite sufficient to hasten Lucy's steps up stairs, and May somewhat reluctantly accompanied her.

The gentlemen were being very laboriously entertained by Mrs. Cartwright, a not uncomely person of comfortable dimensions, and general appearance and manner of the kind called homely. She had married Mr. Cartwright when he was a

poor man, and her own condition was that of a poor girl; so that she had never enjoyed the advantage of an education at Minerva House, and took views of the world and of society altogether different from those of her daughter. It was a great relief to her when the latter appeared, for although Mrs. Cartwright was at ease with Mr. Hargrave, she did not feel what she called 'equal' to keeping up a conversation with the 'grand-looking gentleman.'

And at this crisis, I am sorry to say, Lucy suffered a collapse, and was covered with unnecessary confusion; for her demonstrativeness was, after all, only of a spasmodic kind, liable to sudden checks, and without any reserve of composure. It was strong with people with whom she fancied she had a right to be familiar, and she was quite assured, as we have seen, on first meeting with Captain Pemberton. But he was May's father and a middle-aged man, and she had an idea, common to persons of her kind while they are young, that middle-aged persons are of no account, and old persons, for the stronger reason, mere encumbrances, to be treated with more or less contempt. She had been for two years at Minerva House, and been taught a great many accomplishments; but her education, as you may see, had been neglected.

So it was that the presence of the stranger threw her into confusion; and from being her own frank and particularly free self, she suddenly became such a mass of affectation that, in a person of less natural attractions, would have been simply disgusting. It was by no means becoming, even to Lucy, whose beauty was of a healthy, happy order, and was nothing if not natural. For her little eyes were almost too bright to be expressive, her little mouth could not be made to mean anything but mirth, and she had no nose to speak of, and no chance therefore of gaining dignity in that department. She was, in fact, a pretty little, plump, laughing girl, and so long as she had courage to be that and nothing more she was

charming to a great many people; but when she lost her presence of mind she retreated into airs and graces, which made her mincing, feeble, and wearisome. For affectation which is successful and affectation which is unsuccessful are two different things. A woman who can act may do a great deal of execution in that way; but a woman who can't is lost whenever she ventures to play a part which is not her own.

It was for this reason, I suppose, that Lucy did not seem to make much impression upon the stranger, who was introduced as Captain Halidame, and proved to be a light dragoon on leave from his regiment in India, who was supposed to have designs on Shuttleton society in the way of a wife. His beauty, judged by a regular standard, was open to question; but he had, as May thought, and Lucy afterwards said, a very distinguished air, justifying, indeed, the description of the domestic, who, by the way, during the whole of his visit was loud in her praises, among her colleagues, of his lovely moustache and general appearance, and seemed to consider him in the light of a military angel.

Without committing themselves to quite so extreme an opinion as this, both Lucy and May were far from insensible to the attractions of their new acquaintance, who, besides being a very favourable version of the conventional style of dragoon as regarded his general 'form,' had an ease of deportment quite beyond acquirement, a confidential—almost caressing—manner, a rich, soft voice, and a pair of clear grey eyes, which, well employed as they were, gave an air of sincerity to everything he said. Beside Cecil Halidame, the friend by whom he had been presented, Lucy thought, looked positively vulgar. Yet Mr. Richard Hargrave was a notability in Shuttleton—called Beau Hargrave, in consequence of his fashionable pretensions—and hitherto regarded by Lucy as the finest gentleman she had ever seen. He was one of the representative men of Young Shuttleton—one of the large and growing class who, beginning life under

far more easy conditions than their fathers, attend as little as possible to business and as much as possible to society, the main object of their ambition being to push themselves among the county people and attach themselves in their diversions to the officers of the garrison. Such was the proud position of Mr. Richard Hargrave—a sandy, sanguine, cheerful, assured gentleman, with 'educated whisker,' a tendency to light blue in the matter of cravats, and a style of dressing generally which would have been more 'swell' if it had been less 'smart,' and if his clothes had not always looked as if they had just come home from the tailor's.

But Mr. Hargrave might have appeared upon that occasion in the costume of a scarecrow for all the attention given to his appearance by the ladies. I am quite aware that these interesting persons ought not, and are supposed not, to look upon any men with admiration unless they are, or are going to be, their husbands. But I am afraid these conditions are not always complied with; and even May Pemberton—who even from the glimpse of her that has yet been obtained, you may see to be more likely than most people to be perfect in this as in other respects—could not escape being influenced by Cecil Halidame's powers of pleasing; and of these there had been a conspiracy to make him conscious in every society that he had known for the past fifteen years. For this pleasant person was not quite young. He looked thirty, and might be five years older; and the experience acquired by a man who makes being pleasant his business in life, and has personal advantages to assist the object, gains him a great deal more in influence than he loses in years.

Poor Lucy was, as we have seen, quite overthrown by this charming presence, lost herself, and could not choose but take refuge in the most abject form of finikin affectation. During the half-hour that the visitors stayed she did nothing but make the most artificial, vapid remarks upon subjects that she knew

nothing about; confused persons and things through sheer absence of mind; and at times talked utter nonsense, to the astonishment of Mr. Hargrave and May, who were accustomed to her in her natural, unembarrassed, and ultra-demonstrative state of mind. The suavity of Captain Halidame, always great, was taxed sorely to muster up attention to and apparent interest in her feeble flow of small talk; and, altogether, I fancy that this usually popular young person never made so poor an impression upon any man with whom she conversed. Only one of the party was pleased with her, and that was Mrs. Cartwright. That not very acute lady fancied that the more Lucy was unlike herself, the more she must be like a highly accomplished *dame du monde*; and the more absurd the girl became, the more did her mother think herself indebted to Minerva House.

There was another reason, too, why Lucy was uneasy with the stranger. The interest with which he regarded May was apparent, notwithstanding his, at times evident, attempts to disguise it. He had a thorough composure, which enabled him to talk to all the ladies at the same time; but whenever any pause took place, his eye always wandered to May, and settled upon her with an earnestness which more than once brought the blood into her cheeks. She, poor child, said but little, and was almost as much embarrassed by thoughts as Lucy was by the want of them. Fortunately, the weakness did not take the same form. But it was equally a relief to May as to Lucy when the two men rose to go, and then a few words were said about the object of their visit, which was simply an invitation to the approaching ball for the new acquaintance.

There was no difficulty about that.

'Of course,' said Lucy to Mr. Hargrave, in the absence of Mrs. Cartwright, who had made her escape some time before, 'we shall have much pleasure in seeing your friend, and will not fail to send him an invitation; though he must be

prepared for a very mixed society, as it is to be one of papa's official entertainments at the Town Hall, and the Shuttleton people—some of them at least—are dreadfully rough.'

This was said with a pretty little air which Lucy believed would be exactly that of a duke's daughter warning off an enamoured marquis from a feast which his grace her father was obliged to give to his tenantry.

'Oh! I have no fears,' replied the captain, 'of a few savages. I think they are rather a relief from the monotony of civilized society.'

This not very brilliant remark was made mechanically; for Cecil Halidame was considering how he could obtain a piece of information without which he was reluctant to leave the house.

'I take it for granted,' he added, in pursuance of his object, 'that, as an additional set-off against the savages, the ball will have the presence of Miss—'

Here he paused, for he had not caught May's name when they were introduced, and this was the piece of information that he wanted.

'Oh yes, indeed!' replied Lucy, quite herself again at the idea; 'of course my dear friend May Pemberton will be there.'

This time Captain Halidame must have heard the name, given as it was in Lucy's most assured voice; and either the name or the fact that May was to be at the ball must have caused the strange agitation which immediately marked his manner. He became pale, and then he made an irrelevant remark; and it was two or three minutes before he could muster up a commonplace expression of satisfaction such as was demanded by the occasion.

There was nothing novel or strange in the circumstances of the visit; but it had caused a great deal of embarrassment to three of those concerned, and Captain Halidame felt as relieved as either of the others when he once more found himself in the bleak square with his new but intimate friend Mr. Hargrave, who had nothing more dangerous about him than can come of educated

whiskers, immaculate costume, and a cheerful and assured view of things in general.

As for Lucy, she did nothing all lunch time but talk about Captain Halidame. She recovered her self-possession wonderfully after he had gone; and you would have fancied, hearing her talk, that she had been twisting him round her little finger from the first moment when she was confronted with him in the drawing-room. There were no mincing, fluttering, affected little ways now. She was once more Lucy Cartwright, the mayor's daughter, accustomed to have her own way, and who had not put her papa to the expense of keeping her two years at Minerva House for nothing.

The way she praised her new acquaintance was nothing short of disgraceful, and it was very fortunate that her father was not there to hear her. As for her mother, she set down everything she did not understand or consider quite right to Minerva House; and anything that her daughter did or said, after so much money had been spent on her education, could not, in this respectable lady's opinion, be otherwise than proper. If anything was wrong, she would have argued, had the question ever suggested itself, why should they have gone to all that expense?

Minerva House may have had something to do with Lucy's demonstration, but it would scarcely have applauded it for all that. Captain Halidame might have had soft-speaking eyes and a dear gentle manner, and might have been in the habit of remarking that it was a fine day as if he meant an offer of marriage; but there was no occasion for Lucy to go into such particulars; and it would have been much more proper on the part of that young lady if she had kept her opinions on the subject to herself. As for May, admiring Halidame as she confessedly did, she ought to have been pleased to hear his praises. But girls are very strange. There is no understanding them nine times out of ten. And it might have been observed that the

more Lucy commended the captain the more annoyed did May look. At one time it really appeared as if a difference of opinion might be expected on the subject. This was after lunch was over, and May, after going upstairs for her hat, was coming down with her dear friend. Lucy saw that something had annoyed her, and spoke to her in such a kind, tender way, that May was quite disarmed, and hugging the astonished Lucy round the neck, leant upon her shoulder and fell to kissing her, apparently for no reason on earth.

CHAPTER IV.

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE, IN WHICH INSTINCT COMES TO A DECISIVE CONCLUSION.

Three days elapsed between the visit of Mr. Hargrave and his friend to the Cartwrights, and the ball which was its occasion. During that time May had an idea that Captain Halidame, wishing probably to make the acquaintance of her father, would call at the house. But he made no sign of the kind, nor did he appear in any of the public places to which Miss Pemberton and her still inseparable friend resorted in the wagonette. He was not even seen in the streets—at least by the young ladies, who, however, never looked for him, I suppose, but conducted themselves with the reserve proper to their sex and years. Curiously enough, too, they did not talk about him after that memorable morning, and mentioned his name only in the most casual manner. But May, at least, was not destined to forget him; for on the day of the ball, as soon as Captain Pemberton had left the house for the whist, which, since his daughter's recent addiction to going about, had become more habitual to him than before, she received, by a special messenger, a note apparently from her new acquaintance of a most unexpected character. It was to this effect:

'A friend—or one who at least would be so considered—has a favour to ask of Miss Pemberton.

He has sought in vain for the opportunity of a private interview, and in the last resort adopts this means of communication. He implores her, as she values her father's peace and happiness, not to mention to him her accidental meeting with a stranger in — Square three days ago. There are family reasons which would render even an allusion by name to the person in question a source of trouble and embarrassment.'

What ought a young lady in May's position to do when she receives a letter like this? Ought she to keep the secret from her father and establish confidential relations with a stranger; or ought she to do precisely the reverse, be the consequences what they may? But supposing the consequences to be as dangerous as alleged—that they should peril the happiness of her father and cause him trouble and embarrassment—would she be acting in his interest, while exposing him to the penalties involved? May, as you may suppose, weighed the moral considerations on the one hand and the practical considerations on the other. She was already giving the preference to the latter, like most persons—including nearly all ladies—who have an instinct of caution and a conscious or unconscious taste for intrigue, when she remembered that without receiving any request of the kind she had been acting upon it for the past three days. Some other influence than that of the stranger had surely here been at work; and if she continued her course of reticence it would not necessarily be in compliance with the request contained in the letter, but rather in obedience to her own instincts, which were doubtless intended as a warning. Had May been considering the case of another person rather than herself, she would probably have discovered another reason for the omission to mention the meeting with Captain Halidame; but such further discernment being denied her, the instinct theory seemed a very likely one, and decided her election at once. So you see she came out of the conscientious com-

bat triumphantly, and was able to reconcile the moral and the practical issues in a manner beyond reproach on either side.

All this means that May did not tell her father; and as she did not tell her father you may be sure that she did not tell her friend. Fortunately, Captain Pemberton would not be present at the ball. He had no taste for civic festivities, and was content to leave his daughter to the charge of Lucy and the mayor's family generally, by whom he had no doubt that she would be efficiently protected.

CHAPTER V.

A BALL AND SUPPER.

It was arranged that the Cartwrights should call for May and take her to the Town Hall; and they drove to Captain Pemberton's accordingly, rather early in the evening, as became the founders of the festivity. May was ready for them, looking, they all declared, more lovely than ever. She was simply dressed—all in white—but the simplicity was that of a princess, and had an ostentatious and aggressive effect calculated to inflict serious annoyance upon gorgeous rivals. Lucy was one of these, being costumed—in her favourite sky blue—with an amount of extravagance, which, one would fancy, would be conceived only in the dream of an intoxicated milliner. She wore gems, too, while May's ornaments were merely flowers. But Lucy was not jealous at finding May so effective, and was quite contented with herself, as became so well-regulated a young person. She made one remark about May's toilette, however, which was the occasion, subsequently, of a great many events connected with this history. It was in the cloak room, immediately after they had arrived, and when Mrs. Cartwright was out of hearing, that Lucy said—

'You look charming—more than charming—May, dear, to-night. But there is one want, and you must not think me rude if I tell you of it, especially as I have taken

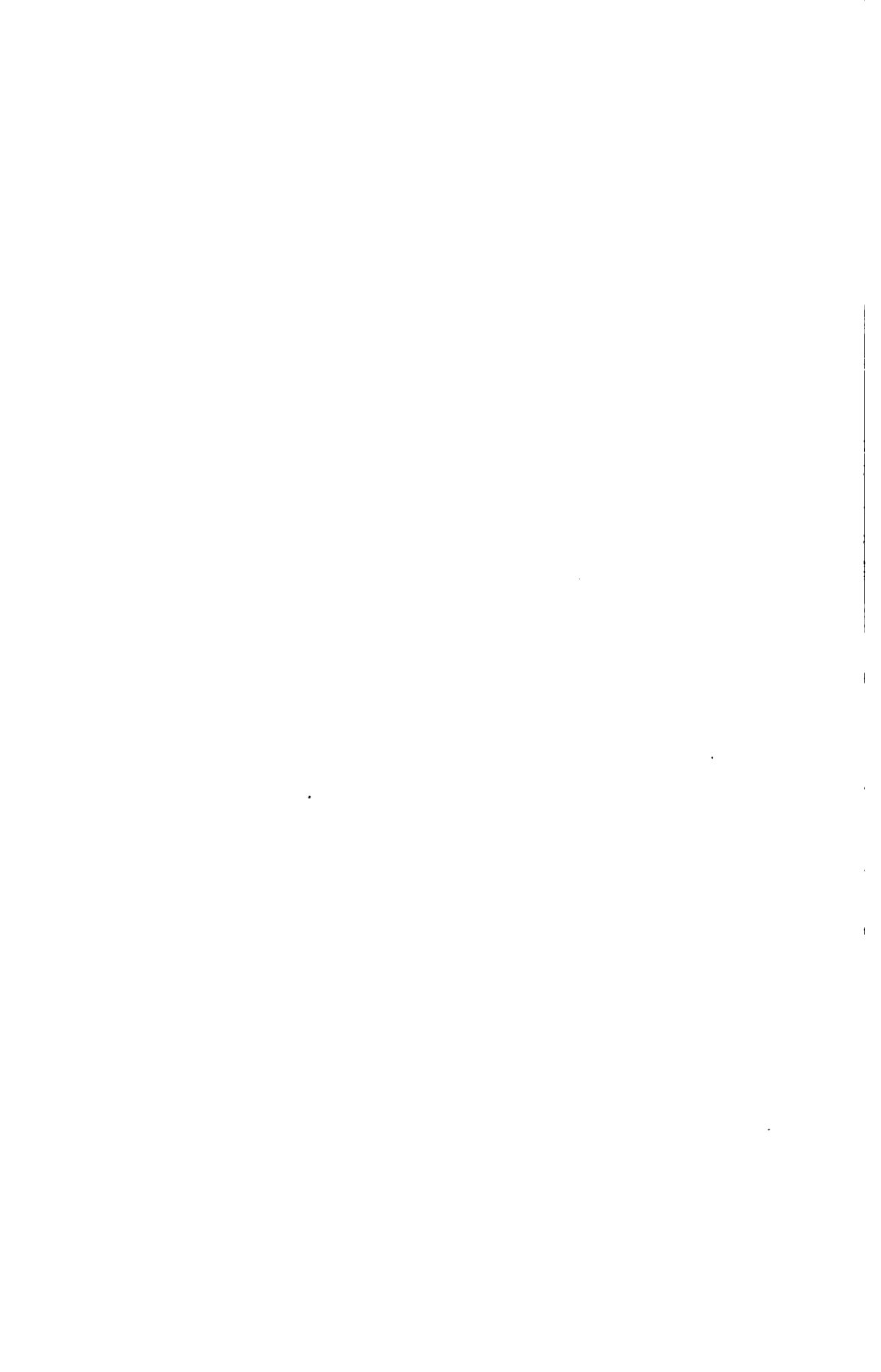




Drawn by Adelaide Claxton.]

RIDDLES OF LOVE.

[See the Story. Chap. V.]



the liberty of providing for it. You have no ornaments, and I have brought you a necklace of my own which I shall insist upon your wearing. I don't want it myself—it won't go with my other jewellery—besides one can't wear everything at once, you know. There now, don't be shy—let me put it on for you.'

And before May could make any practical protest, Lucy had fastened round her throat such a diamond necklace as she had never seen before. When it fell into its place, May's first impulse, as she stood before the glass, was one of admiration. It harmonised so admirably with her toilette, and was in itself so brilliant an object, that its new wearer could not restrain her delight as she saw herself 'glittering like the morning star, full of life and splendour and joy.'

But a sudden thought came like a cloud upon her radiance. What would her father think? His pride would never endure that she should appear in borrowed splendour, nor indeed would her pride have borne the indignity but for the horrible temptation of seeing herself look so beautiful.

It was her duty to remonstrate, and remonstrate she did. She urged her father's certain objections, and even went to the extent of removing the ornament and returning it to her friend. But you know Lucy's imperious temper. She would hear no refusal. And to save a 'scene' in the presence of all sorts of bejewelled people who were beginning to arrive, May had at last no resource but to adopt the adornment, and give the crowning effect to her charms for the evening.

Lucy rather spoiled the delicacy of her tribute by remarking as they were entering the ball-room—

'You need not mind who stares at the necklace. It is worth three hundred pounds. It was given to me by an awfully rich man, who was under great obligations to papa and was at his wife's end to return them. Papa got him into parliament, in fact.'

May had no time to feel so diffi-

dent as she otherwise would have done at having an article of so much value in her custody, for they were now in the hall, and in the midst of a fairer scene than May had ever beheld before.

The mayor of a provincial town is a very great personage in his way. He is not only obliged by official duty to be magnificent, but he is provided with official means for the purpose. And when he happens besides to be a man of large personal wealth, like Mr. Cartwright, you may be sure that his entertainments are not the less splendid on that account. The Town Hall of Shuttleton was not a very beautiful edifice as regarded its exterior, though it had been recently built at a large cost to the ratepayers, and greatly to the disgust of the minority of that body, when they were outvoted in the council. The propriety of erecting such a place was indeed still a fierce subject of controversy in the local papers; one side declaring the measure to be a testimony to the growing prosperity of the town, conceived in a spirit of enlightened enterprise; and the other maintaining it to be a shameful party job, dictated by a reckless indifference to the interests of the community, already oppressed by the burden of local taxation. People did not quite believe the assertions on either side, but it was customary to make equally contrary criticisms, whatever was done in the borough, where the bitterest party animosity was carried into the most everyday transactions. Thus no Conservative dare deal with a Radical tradesman, however he might like his goods; and the same prohibition was enforced the other way. Not long before the date of the grave events I am narrating a new resident aspiring to public life was nearly ruined among the Liberals, because, in an evil quarter of an hour he had innocently allowed his hair to be cut by a Conservative coiffeur.

But about the exterior of the Town Hall. It was bare, like the buildings in Shuttleton generally, and gave you the same idea of bleak-

ness. But inside, not only was the place more pleasant to the eye, but it received help on the present occasion from special decorations, in which flowers figured with prominent effect. And after all, for the purposes of a ball it does not much matter what is the particular character of the room. The great points are that it should be large enough and light enough—the band and the people do the rest. Not, however, that the mayor availed himself of any facility so afforded to evade even the minutest preparation, not merely for the eyesight but the comfort of his guests; and one of the comforts was a dressing-room in which the youth of Shuttleton brushed their hair and made themselves ‘beautiful for ever’ at least half-a-dozen times in the evening. They are wonderful Sybarites—the festive people in the manufacturing districts.

The people, however, were of course the important feature in the scene; and they had mustered in enormous numbers. Not only Shuttleton, but all the places round about were represented, including the county generally in large force. The lord-lieutenant was expected, but could not come. But there were deputy-lieutenants who not only did come, but came in costume, and had a great advantage over the army men in the way of epaulettes, and the old style of uniform generally, which looks, somehow, so much more responsible in a room than the new. And then there were the army men and the militia men, and the yeomanry men, and the volunteers, all of whom appeared in their war paint, and had separate advantages of their own. And then there were the men in private life who, owing to the crowd of uniforms, also gained a kind of distinction from their more sombre state, and the greater individuality which it gave to their appearance. And then there were the ladies—more important persons, of course, than all the rest put together—arrayed, every one of them, with an evident determination to be the best-dressed person present. Altogether it was a scene which everybody believed

could have no parallel in the metropolis—and to a certain extent I dare say they were in the right.

The dancing was just beginning when our friends entered the room. The fancy quadrille had been only a creature of Lucy's imagination—it never came to pass. But there was no need for any special display, which would have retarded the serious business of the ball. And a serious business it was, as far as activity is concerned. Young Shuttleton is a great dancer—dances everything from one end of the programme to the other, and then dances everything over again, if he can only persuade a sufficient number of enthusiasts to stay. The London idlers present were quite cut out by the provincial activities; and the latter had the advantage of knowing most of their partners beforehand, so that they had no need to wait for introductions. Some of them came with their cards half filled up, owing to an insidious course of visiting for a few days before; and indeed, as would be sure to happen in an assembly which was open to the reproach of being ‘mixed,’ there were a number of private parties who, by previous arrangement, ‘kept to themselves.’ For in social Shuttleton there were wheels within wheels—circles within circles—as elsewhere. ‘Pig iron did not mix with tenpenny nails;’ people who belonged to neither degree were haughty about mixing with either; and nothing could be more absurd than the ostentation with which some sets looked down upon other sets, except the meanness with which other sets looked up to some sets. But this always happens where Britons meet in great crowds; and though there might be examples of private wretchedness among great people who got compromised by small, and small people who were not sufficiently associated with great, there was nothing apparent in the proceedings to announce anything but the most supreme satisfaction on the part of everybody. Of course I do not count the men and the women who got nothing but wrong partners, or, getting the right ones, did not succeed in ‘getting on’ with them

quite so pleasantly as they had hoped. Things, you know, like this will be in every great festivity—to parody Southey's lines; and there are heartburnings born of balls, even in provincial towns, which are full of poetry and romance. But without all the politics of pleasure a great ball would be but a little affair; and you may be sure that the great ball at Shuttleton was not wanting in this kind of excitement. I should be sorry to enter into the feelings of every local dandy who rushed out of the room after a rebuff to brush his hair, for the fourth time, or every local beauty who relapsed into the cold shade of her mamma because her warm feelings had been slighted. All I care to know is that the general effect was festive in the extreme, and that dancing was done as if dancing was the main object in life.

But our personal acquaintance in the room is but limited; and I can tell you in detail only of our immediate friends. As for Lucy, she was soon lost in the whirl of her engagements; and as for May, who meant to be very quiet, there was a great chance of her never being found again. Between the people she knew and must be accepted, and the people she did not know and could not always be refused, she had an awful time of it; and if a young lady could be danced to death she would have been in sad danger of so romantic an end by the middle of the evening.

But May was not one of those who were able to look upon the ball in the abstract as a 'brilliant gathering,' a 'charming occasion,' and so forth. She was disappointed at least up to the middle of the evening; for she was looking for somebody who was not to be seen, at any rate not by her eyes. I will not make a stranger of the reader, and conceal the fact that the object of interest was Cecil Halidame; but it must be confessed that their acquaintance was a very brief one as yet, and the curiosity with which he inspired her would not perhaps look well to avow. But we all know that the most impressionable young ladies are those who say least about their

impressions, and I suspect that May Pemberton was one of these.

It was early, as I have said, when May arrived; and it became so late at last that the object of curiosity or interest—what am I to call him?—would have been past waiting for in the ideas of most rational persons. Eleven o'clock was, of course, not an out-of-the-way hour, especially in the case of a man who had been dining out, as you may be sure that Cecil Halidame had; but when it came to twelve, and half-past twelve, there really seemed very small chance. But May had not much time to think, and the most impertinent scrutineer of appearances would not have suspected that the sunny-looking girl in the white gauzy dress with the white roses, and the magnificent diamonds on her neck, could have anything less bright on her mind. Indeed the manner in which she was beset by partners would have been a perfect assurance of her entire happiness in the ideas of most of the ladies present.

It wanted just a quarter to one o'clock when May at last saw Cecil—you see I am getting more familiar with him than May upon a short acquaintance—standing in a doorway, looking really handsome this time, for he wore his brilliant Hussar uniform, which that impulsive Lucy had insisted upon as a condition of the invitation. He saw May at the same moment, and the lady was not a little annoyed, for she had just given her arm to Mr. Richard Hargrave for the last dance before supper, and Mr. Richard Hargrave was parading her about the room as if she was his own personal property, free from all encumbrances, and realizable at any period he might please. It was this gentleman's custom, however, thus to make the most of any advantageous lady who committed herself to his temporary charge, so nobody who knew him supposed that there was 'anything in it.' Indeed the general belief among his female acquaintances was that if ever he married at all the object of his choice would be some bold widow of mature years who would insist upon marrying him. May

had an inkling of the failings of her friend, though as a general rule she saw little of him and cared less; and she did not mind his proprietorial ways save for their appearance in the eyes of Cecil. But after all she ought not to trouble herself upon that account; so she did not trouble herself, or thought she did not at any rate, which came to the same thing.

Nevertheless the galop seemed a very long one, and she was very glad when the music ceased, and people who had been talking at the top of their voices—and it may be from the bottom of their hearts—became also silent, and bowed and promenaded their partners, or dropped them into seats, or took them in to supper as the case might be. It was May's fate to be of the latter number. Mr. Hargrave—as was remarked by a cynical young lady with sea-green eyes and snaky ringlets, and so *sireny* an appearance generally as she floated about the room, that you wondered what she had done with her hand-mirror and her comb—Mr. Hargrave was like a cold, very easily caught and very difficult to get rid of, and in the case of susceptible persons was known to last all the season. So you may depend upon it he did not relinquish his possession of May, but marched her in to the repast, which was spread in an adjoining apartment.

'The supper was provided on the most liberal scale, by our enterprising fellow-townsmen Messrs. Gourmandish and Son, of the High Street, and included all the delicacies of the season.' So said the two local journals on the following Saturday in almost identical words. It was certainly conceived and executed in right mayorial spirit, and displayed in right mayorial state—and that you may be sure is saying a great deal of it. But May, though not so insensible to supper as some people suppose a young lady ought to be, was not, for reasons at which I have hinted, prepared to give herself up to the unrestrained enjoyment of all the pretty things provided by our enterprising fellow-townsmen the confectioners, and

paid for by our still more enterprising fellow-townsmen the mayor—the latter consideration, however, being a vulgar one, for which I apologize. And her distraction was not lessened by that irrepressible Lucy, who was talking, laughing, partaking of pronounced refreshments, exhilarating herself with cracker bonbons, and performing a dozen similar feats at the same time, with half a dozen men assembled round her shoulders, slaves to her slightest wish. For Lucy, who was seated on the other side of the table a little farther up, had actually the want of consideration to ask her, 'Where was Captain Halidame?' May thought the whole table would have turned their eyes upon her, as she avowed her ignorance upon the point; but took no notice, so that at least was a relief. And upon consideration May was obliged to admit that there was no reason why Lucy should not have asked the question if she wanted to know.

The festivity at the several tables was of no common kind. The company attacked the feast like a fort, and it was not their fault if they found any part of it too strong for them. Some points, of course, offered steady resistance, but these once overcome the defenceless portion of the repast was massacred in cold blood; and when one set of besiegers were tired of the slaughter, they gave place to the reliefs which were continually coming up; so that the carnage was continuous, and one lady, in a green old age and a blue old turban, said in an insatiable way worthy of Ghengis Khan, that she had 'never enjoyed herself so much in the whole course of her life.' But do not suppose that this remorseless execution is peculiar to the manufacturing districts. Wherever people dance in earnest they sup in earnest, and dancing in Shuttleton was made as much a business as a pleasure can well be. May, who was of a humane disposition, as you may suppose, did not like sieges and sacks, even in association with festivity, and made a retirement from the table as soon as she was allowed to do so; for she, like Lucy, had an assemblage round her

shoulders, and could not move for a time without discomposing a considerable crowd. Mr. Hargrave, however, at last took her out, and then 'did not quite know where to leave her; for the Cartwrights, including Lucy, were not to be seen. So May, rather than detain Mr. Hargrave, who had to attend to other friends, said that she would wait in a side room. There she found a seat near a window admitting positive fresh air, and giving a glimpse of clear sky, with a cluster of stars keeping watch over the night, now fast changing into morning.

May was scarcely left alone before she was joined by the Hussar.

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER SUPPER, AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

'Captain Halidame!' said May, addressing the man for whom she had been waiting all the evening, as if surprised at his intrusion.

'Miss Pemberton,' returned the Hussar, in tones of the deepest respect; 'am I to consider that our very slight acquaintance is insufficient to give me the right to address you?'

'Oh no, Captain Halidame,' returned the lady, in some confusion; 'our acquaintance is not of very long standing, but it may at least give you that privilege. Indeed I had expected to see you earlier this evening. You may remember that when we met at Mrs. Cartwright's, it was understood that you were coming here to-night.'

'And I should have come earlier,' answered the Captain, quickly, with an air as if May had engaged to meet him; 'but I was detained, and—and—could not arrive before. I was doubtful, in fact, whether to come at all.'

'Ah! what a pity!' returned May, by way of making an indifferent remark; 'you have missed a very pleasant evening.'

'You found it pleasant,' said the Hussar, as if challenging her right to that privilege. 'For myself, I came only to—to meet you.'

'To meet me? This at least is

an honour to which I can scarcely have a right. And our short acquaintance'—here May paused in some embarrassment.

'I am aware,' returned the Hussar, regarding her with an earnestness which defeated his companion's glance, and sent it wandering upon the ground—'I am aware that our acquaintance is short in point of time. But your name has been long known to me—and your family—and you have not been so unknown to me as I have been to you.'

'You know my father then? Have you not renewed your acquaintance? He leads a retired life here, but is always glad to meet old friends.'

'Your father, Miss Pemberton, is a man for whom I have the highest respect. But he is the last man I would like to meet just now. There are family reasons—'

'Yes, of course that letter came from you, and had I known how to address it, it would have been returned'—May had almost forgotten the letter until this allusion—'and I must tell you, Captain Halidame, that whether our acquaintance were short or long you had no right to send such a letter to me. A friend would not be entitled to claim the confidence—still less a stranger.'

'But that confidence you have hitherto respected? At least I trust so.'

Halidame said this with an air half-imploing, half-commanding, which gained for him something like an advantage.

'I have not as yet shown it to my father,' she returned, 'because I was willing to hear some explanation from its writer before giving the trouble and vexation at which it hinted. But if no explanation be given—what can I do?'

There was something apologetic in the last appeal which weakened May's position.

'Unfortunately,' was the gloomy rejoinder, 'I am unable to give any. I can only repeat the warning I wrote—that the mere mention of my name to Captain Pemberton as that of a person present in this place, and still more as that of a

person known to you, would bring misery upon him and cast a cloud upon his life which would cause to you, of all others, the bitterest regret.'

May looked at the speaker as if he were a riddle which she wished to guess. She was too much puzzled to be so much astonished as she might have been. She turned upon the couch on which she had taken her rest, looked upon the sky and the cluster of stars, and felt the fresh air, which came cooler upon her cheek as the morning advanced. She knew not how to answer. But she turned again, and looked, with a radiance about her which eclipsed all her roses, and rivalled even her diamonds on her neck. Before her stood the Hussar, with pale proud face, and eyes that sought to interrogate her own. She rose from her seat with a sudden effort, and said—

'Captain Halidame, what do you want with me? I saw you once, and you wrote me a letter which I ought not to have received. You take advantage of me here, while so few people are about, to renew its subject. By what right do you do this? And supposing that I should obey you'—here she gave a little stamp with her foot—'what do you mean then?'

'Miss Pemberton,' returned the Hussar, more earnestly and gloomily than ever, 'I would say a great deal more than I dare. Your beauty—intensified to me, I will not deny, by some associations it recalls—has brought me to your side with an irresistible impulse, and given me the courage which I fear is only that of desperation. But I swear by those stars, May, that I love you!'

May sank upon her seat; and it was well that she did so for the sake of appearances; for at this crisis a crowd of people came from the supper room, and one of the most audacious of the number—a very young member of the tribe of young Shuttleton, who had been worshipping May from afar all the evening, and was emboldened to address her at last only through the demoralization caused by the

siege to which I have referred, and the final defeat of the garrison—actually asked her to dance.

This was out of the question, so May, for want of a better excuse, said, 'that she was engaged'—glancing at Cecil Halidame as she said so, to help her out of the difficulty. She was really engaged to somebody, as her card might have shown, but the glance at the Hussar was enough. He took her at her word—or rather at her glance—and poor May had to answer his appeal by giving him a waltz.

It is very awkward to have to waltz with a man under such circumstances—young ladies will surely agree with me there. And it is surely still more awkward when your partner renews his suit instead of giving you back to your chaperone, or merely walking you about to cool. Captain Halidame, while performing the latter process, took up the thread of the previous conversation, and, but for the confusion which now began to prevail in the ball room, he would have made May more embarrassed than he did. For young Shuttleton by this time began to be unruly; it had taken just a little too much in the way of stimulants, and not all the king's horses and all the king's men could call it back to ways of decorum. And having taken too much, it of course wanted to take more; and unfortunately the hospitality of the host and hostess allowed large license for the purpose. So sparkling wine was drunk out of much larger vessels than was ever intended for it, and sparkling conversation assumed a much larger tone than it had ventured to assume at the beginning of the evening. Even Lucy, who was not put down by a trifle, had to keep the crowd of her admirers at a respectful distance, and to restrain herself within a limited circle. As for May, she was compelled, as she thought, to cling to the Hussar for protection, and so it came that she danced with him more dances than one, without, however, any further return to the subject which occupied them both.

At three in the morning Mulli-

gatawny soup was served to the sinking dancers; and it was while a rush was being made at this opportune refreshment that Cecil again sought to engage May on the subject which was nearest his heart. The pair were together in their old place near the window, through which the air came fresher than before, while the light of the stars was more pale in the now-determined morning.

'May,' said the Hussar, 'I love you, and I know that you love me. Will you keep our loves secret? One day I will tell you all.'

'I dare not,' replied May, evading response to the most important part of his avowal; 'you should tell me, if you love me, why you will not see my father.'

Then the people came crowding in again, and May was claimed by the Cartwrights, who were drawn up in order to dismiss their guests.

'I hope you have enjoyed yourself,' was Mrs. Cartwright's usual greeting to the guests who came up and made their adieux; 'it is not our fault if you have not, for Cartwright ordered everything of the best.' And Cartwright, who stood by, and seemed thoroughly weary of his friends, corroborated this assertion with a significant nod.

Lucy did not seem to think this exhibition quite dignified, and drew May towards the door, where the carriage was waiting. Captain Halidame was waiting too on the steps, and it was just after the mayor and mayoress, and Lucy and May, had entered the carriage that May made the discovery that—she had lost her necklace.

CHAPTER VII.

BROMPTON ROW—A SKIRMISH—AND THE CAPTURE OF A SECOND FLOOR.

The reader who has not made the acquaintance of Brompton Row, Brompton, London, need not take the omission much to heart, for the association is not likely to gain him any great advantage, either practical or honorary; and the place in question may be resembled at best to a shabby person in the midst of brilliant society. For below Brompton

Row and above Brompton Row are favourite haunts of the prosperous and wealthy. The new squares and houses, to be sure, are suggestive of inhabitants with new incomes; but incomes must be new at one time or another, like families and titles, and it would be illiberal to make any objection to them on that score. The residents in the more distinguished quarters certainly look down upon Brompton Row, and consider that all those parts of the main thoroughfare where the houses seem shrinking away from the road, and the shops alone take up a bold position and advance their goods to the front of the pavement, ought to be improved off the face of fashionable creation. That this great work will be accomplished one of these days we may be tolerably certain; but ugly old houses in the midst of handsome new neighbourhoods have an importance quite apart from their intrinsic claims, and, even when leases do not interfere, are as difficult to get out of the way as an organ-grinder who knows the value of peace and quietness, and there is no remedy in the case of the houses by an appeal to the police.

It was about a fortnight after the ball at Shuttleton, and towards the close, therefore, of the London season, that a lady and gentleman might have been seen—by anybody not too proud, and in too great a hurry to reach the Park, for it was getting late in the afternoon—knocking at the door of one of the numerous houses in Brompton Row which were labelled with the announcement of 'Apartments to let.' The particular mansion was one of the dingiest of its dingy neighbours, and, to judge by its windows and doorway, would have gained any number of marks 'for dirt' in a competitive examination. Not, however, that the peculiar accumulation which a late eminent statesman philosophised into 'matter in the wrong place' always gives a bad style to a house. There is dirt and dirt. In the case of a great mansion whose owner has so many places to live in that he cannot give his town residence more than three

months in the year, it is associated with dignity compared with which the bright door-knockers and whitened steps of little streets and terraces must feel abject indeed. But the house in Brompton Row was open to no inference of the kind. It was evidently inhabited, as a general rule, to the utmost extent of its capacity, and the dirt bore all the air of a necessary infiction.

What could the lady and gentleman be doing at such a house? No one would suppose that they intended to live there, for they had the appearance of persons not only of some rank in life, but of easy pecuniary resources. They were both well dressed, and the lady wore—but you may guess the kind of costume that the lady wore, for the lady was no other than May Pemberton, the gentleman being no other than her father.

I may as well tell you at once that they *were* going to live there—that, is to say, if the apartments happened to suit—and this fact seemed somewhat difficult of investigation. The question of opening the door required, not exactly a pitched battle, but certainly a decided skirmish, to decide it. Captain Pemberton commenced operations by knocking and ringing; and finding that demonstration fail to engage the attention of the enemy, he followed it up by ringing and knocking by way of change of tactics. The new movement caused a reconnaissance from a second-floor window on the part of a face that looked feminine, but gave the observer no time to enter into further particulars, as it retreated rapidly upon being seen, and a pair of hands apparently belonging to it slammed down the casement in a decisive manner. The captain was just about to throw back his position towards the road, in order to take a more general view of the place previous to a final retirement, when he found that the other side had thrown out a skirmisher on his left flank, and that he and his daughter were being carefully surveyed from the area. The two sides being within range, a few shots were the natural consequence.

‘What is it you want, sir?’ asked the young lady, the author probably of the reconnaissance from above.

‘I want the door opened in the first place,’ said the captain, flattering himself that he had made his shot tell.

‘And what then?’ demanded the skirmisher, who felt by no means hit as yet.

‘I want to see the apartments,’ was the brisk rejoinder.

The last shot brought the girl down, or rather brought her up; for she disappeared from the area like a flash of lightning late for an appointment, and appeared with the street door in her hand with a celebrity suggestive of relationship to Sir Boyle Rocher’s famous bird, and seldom seen except in a Christmas pantomime; so that, to make the illusion complete, Captain Pemberton ought to have laid across the doorway so that she might trip over him as she stepped out, and May should have pirouetted into the road clad in a starry costume composed of any number of gossamer skirts. But I regret to say, in the cause of the public amusement, that neither of the pair took this dramatic view of the situation.

The domestic, too, dropped her pantomimic ways, and it was in a decorous spirit of legitimate comedy that she apologised for keeping the visitors waiting, and volunteered at once to conduct them up stairs.

The first appearance of the interior was not very promising. The domestic, in the first place, was peculiar. She had a decidedly pretty face, fresh and round, with bright eyes and a little turned-up nose, an expression of subdued sauciness, and a manner decidedly above her apparent position. So was her dress, indeed, in some respects; for over a common cotton dress, trailing a little on one side where the skirt seemed to be torn from the gathers, she wore a velvet mantle that had seen better days but might have seen worse, and at the back of her auburn hair a little bonnet having all the appearance of moving in the same circles of society as the mantle, being just a little battered but rather festive in appearance than

otherwise. The entry in which she stood was of the kind which may be called a hall if people please to be poetical, but is designated prosaically a passage. It was not undistinguished by a presence of misguided matter such as gave a character to the outside of the house; and the stairs conveyed a similar impression, heightened by the fact that the carpet enjoyed a proud state of freedom, and refused to be confined to cold conventionality by tyrannical brass rods, to which, however, resistance was easy, as they were too short to reach more than one of their staples at once, and so stuck about pleasantly in people's feet. In the distance, on the first landing, was a conservatory, which had a strong dash of a store-room and a slight suspicion of a kitchen about it. There were flowers here and there, and a cage with a couple of canaries hanging in the centre; but the floor was considerably occupied by 'somebody's luggage,' and the shelves received considerable additions from somebody's dinner, or rather the remains of it, which seemed to have been dropped there—plates, dishes, glasses and all—in one of the pantomimic flights of the evidently agile but not very neat-handed Philis who now ushered them up stairs.

Ushered them, did I say? The rooms were on the first floor, and she reached them apparently in about three bounds.

Captain Pemberton and his daughter, who followed at a decorous pace, found her employing the difference of time in putting the principal apartment in order. Her idea of this process seemed to consist in hiding a cup of tea and some bread and butter, of which she had probably been partaking, in the interior of a convenient ottoman otherwise occupied by French romances in paper covers, throwing a shawl in a negligent way with a view to conceal as much as might be the shabbiness of an arm-chair, spreading the antimacassars, drawing the curtains so as to exclude excess of light, and dealing summarily with the least handsome of the vases on the chimney by putting them in her pocket.

She evidently considered that the new lodgers—she had made up her mind that they should become so—were people of a superior class, and would resent dilapidations and want of taste.

So when the captain and May arrived in the apartment its appearance was not so bad as they had expected from the look of the house generally; and when they found that the other rooms were comfortable enough for sleeping purposes, they were content to accept a basis of negotiation and to inquire as to details. Their questions on this head were answered in a triumphant manner. The entire house was on the eve of thorough renovation, and nothing could be more beautiful than all the beautiful things that her mistress had bought for it. Such was the assurance of the young lady, who added her regret that her mistress was not at home to give them further particulars. However, she, the domestic, knew all about everything, and had authority to act in the matter, even to closing the bargain. So when Captain Pemberton found that the rent was more moderate than that of any place he had seen in the course of the afternoon, and May assured him that she would herself be able to give such adornments to the rooms that they would not be recognisable in a day or two, the negotiations were brought to a conclusion by the domain being taken for a month. Both the captain and his daughter were indeed so troubled by the many fruitless efforts they had made to find a temporary home, that, as the hours wore on, they were ready to take almost anything they could find within their means. And people not accustomed to searching for furnished apartments in London may be excused perhaps for feeling a little annoyed at the preposterous prices asked for indifferent accommodation, as well as the equally preposterous pretensions of the landladies, who, if you believe what they say, have always seen better days, do not keep lodging-houses, but are willing to let a few apartments which they do not require, in nine cases out of ten are daughters of colonels

in the army or country rectors, and, in exceptionally audacious instances, are related to living members of the peerage.

Captain Pemberton had such an habitual idea of the unquestionable nature of his own position that he said not a word about 'references,' but the young lady in charge was quite content to take the new lodgers for what they seemed, especially as the gentleman's card described him as Captain; for though Captains are not regarded by business people in London with the same superstitious veneration as in social circles at Shuttleton, the rank still goes a long

way, and gave every satisfaction in the present instance. No further time was therefore lost, and it was arranged that the pair should take possession as soon as they could get their baggage from the railway station, for it was only in the morning that they had arrived from the north. A cab having been prepared they drove off on their mission; and the young lady of the house, who took their interests in hand with wonderful enthusiasm—stimulated too by the advance of a sovereign by the captain—promised that a plain dinner should be ready for them on their return.

MASKS AND MYSTERIES OF HER MAJESTY'S SERVANTS.

'THE stage-door!' What a world of suggestion lies in the well-known words. What a strange medley of memories, hopes, fears, fallacies, airy fancies, grim realities, practical work, ephemeral dreams, they conjure up even to the uninitiated who have lingered about the plain, sordid-looking porch so remote from the grand vestibule of the vast theatre, and there watched, with an almost painful 'curiosity, the closely-shaven men and pink-complexioned women who pass in and out on 'treasury days.' What a life of jest in earnest and laborious play may be found behind that dingy portal by those who have the talismanic pass-word that enables them to make acquaintance with the shadows that lie beyond it.

For few of those most accustomed to the mysterious precinct of 'the green-room' known as 'behind the scenes' ever become so perfectly familiar with it as to lose all sense of a mysterious disconnection from the outer world of everyday experience. The architects who build a theatre, the masons and carpenters, the joiners and smiths and painters, are no more free from this strange influence than are the casters and blowers of glass bottles from the effects of the subtle aroma of the liquors that those vessels may afterwards contain. There is

a ghostly habitancy about a play-house, even when it is empty, which must always exert a spell upon stage-carpenters, scene-shifters, property-men—ay, even upon actors themselves. Although the ordinary actor can afford to think of little but himself and his part, it is not easy to imagine how any stage player could acquire that slight unreality of tone and manner (which, superimposed upon reality of character, make what we call 'good acting') unless it were by some inexplicable association of the place. This, however, is beside our present purpose; for it is not in its public aspect that we are about to regard the stage-door: not in all its bravery of wardrobe amidst flashing lights and paste jewels and the fire of five thousand pairs of eyes that sparkle from 'the front.' The green-room whose dangers wise old Dr. Johnson saw and shunned, nobly distrusting himself, is but a dim apartment today without the flare of gas to mitigate the tarnish of its old-fashioned chimney-glass and the seediness of its furniture. No brilliant costumes rustle and gleam as the actors and actresses pass in and out. Sober and even sorrowful-faced men stand about the 'entrances' to the stage or talk to the two or three ladies who wait to see

whether there is to be any rehearsal of the part for which they were called. Natty little bonnets, coquettish boots, and lace-edged petticoats there are certainly, and even in the men's dresses may be discovered here and there that peculiarity which marks the actor as a man who wears his clothes with a difference; the difference being that he will soon have to change them, and so has a tendency sometimes to remarkable patterns and strange reliefs of colour, as though he might as well take as much as possible out of fashion in a given time. The difference between the private costumes of actors is a wide one: so wide that they are easily distinguished, even by their unlikeness, as belonging to 'the profession.' Either they are more dressed than ordinary people, or much less so. Largish patterns, striking 'cuts,' and a generally pervading assertion of the right to fashionable distinction—or the extreme of an opulent plainness, clerically-cut black, solemn stocks and portentous collars, ebony canes and wide-brimmed hats. The fashion of actors is either that of sham church or sham world: there are few instances of anything between.

It requires this pronounced tendency to reassure them that they are ordinary men. He who for four hours nightly may have to appear in a dress and accoutrements which are intended to destroy his own identity had need to adopt an exaggeration of his own proper costume to recover his personality and vindicate his right to recognition. The ladies have less occasion for this rehabilitating process, for the vagaries of female fashion leave such wide latitude as to make varieties of dress almost indifferent. Indeed, considering the present tendency of stage costumes, it must often be sufficient change for an actress to know that she is completely clothed instead of being only 'dressed for a part.'

But there is no need to draw these distinctions now. There is no audience in that vast dim cavernous area that lies before us as we stand on the great stage at

Drury Lane and look across an almost impenetrable vista at the holland-covered stalls and boxes, wondering how it can be that to-night that dark void shall be alive with eager, expectant faces bright with the gleam of light and the jewels on women's necks; that in place of the odour of gas and orange-peel mingled with the smell of sawdust and the inexpressible flavour that belongs to all shut-up places, a subtle aroma of patchouli, musk, and lavender, the slight *souffron* of kid gloves and macassar shall waft across this chasm of an orchestra and reach the prompter at the wing.

There is nothing more remarkable about a theatre, in its stage-door aspect, than that the ghostly influence of which we spoke just now seems never to be associated with the front of the house. Audiences come and go, but seem to have no abiding haunt in the space before the curtain. As we look out from the footlights this morning we think of the rows of people who filled the seats last night, speculate on the faces of the vast audience that will gather there again in a few hours: but between the two there is no link in the dark tiers of boxes where one can just hear the sound of the broom but can see no shadowy forms save those of the attendants who are preparing for seven o'clock. No: it is behind the scenes that the ghostly company seems ever present; and the man who could spend a night there, even though he might be the fireman in charge, and so with plenty to do to see all safe before he sat down in his Windsor chair to make his early morning coffee, must be a fellow of dull clay indeed if he could ever feel that he was actually alone in the place.

There has been good company there day and night lately, however,—not ghostly company only, but real live flesh and blood, subsisting on substantial pork-chops, sausages, bread, cheese, and porter. The sounds of labour have reverberated in some of those hidden vistas all day long, and have been taken up at midnight again to go

on till cockcrow. You would hardly think it as you stand just inside that mysterious portal and look at the big traditional horseshoe nailed against the wall for luck and as a preservative from any other witchcraft than that which weaves its spells nightly amidst the gay company of Her Majesty's Servants: and yet once pass the threshold that leads you on to the stage and set your foot upon the steep dark stair in that dim, dusty corner, and you shall enter on a region of enchantment, where giants, ogres, sea monsters, fairies, trolls, demons, sirens, necromancers, and chimeras dire are to the manor born. You shall hob-a-nob with Blunderbore, eat your saveloy with the Flying Dutchman, dance a reel with Sawney Bean, ask a question of the Sphinx, propound a riddle to the Sybil, brush the dew from Titania's mantle with Mother Bunch's broom, uncover Ali Baba's jars, put on Morgiana's slippers, sit on Alnaschor's carpet, open Fortunatus's purse, shake hands with the Old Man of the Sea, as you doff Sinbad's turban, tread on the toes of Fee-Faw-Fum, tweak the nose of Timour the Tartar, make one of the family that 'lived in a shoe,' overhaul the wardrobe of Little Bo-peep, make real acquaintance with the Three Bears, wait at home in the cottage for Mother Hubbard; and, if you please, eat very mock turtle soup out of the Dish which ran after the Spoon, that now serves to convey that rather sawdusty dainty to your mouth. More than that, you shall be a real traveller through the gold and silver thickets of the enchanted forest. You saw one of its glades down below quite at the back of the stage, but didn't know it for what it was. The world 'dree' was on you, and it looked only like oddly-shaped slips of lath and canvas streaked with coarse paint and plastered here and there with patches of dull Dutch metal. You shall see the magic artificers busy at work constructing the Realms of Barley Sugar in the Island of Gilt Gingerbread for the great transformation scene of Brilliant Brandy Balls and Transcend-

ant Toffee in the Academical Arcana of Alicapaigne. In a word, you may, with the proper introduction—revealed only under a fearful vow of secrecy—visit the painting-rooms and property-rooms, where grave, pale, and tired-eyed men are at work day and night for the production of the great Christmas Pantomime.

The painting-room is the first surprise, so little does it correspond with the general notion of such a place, and so little are the great scenic artists distinguished from their workmen, in the soiled holland blouses which are the uniforms of the place. It is best not to ask questions, for only the initiated are supposed to have the entrée, and it is possible, that should you exhibit a too obvious curiosity, you may be politely requested to withdraw. At present you feel a little in the way, for on the spacious floor a great sheet of canvas has been spread, whereon a gentleman is walking as though he were practising surveying, and had determined to begin by constructing a great map, marking out the divisions with a long brush, while one or two assistants are similarly engaged in another part of it. This is, in fact, the great scene which will be lowered at the transformation of Grimguffin, Niggedywink, Velocipediaro, and Silver Lily into Clown, Pantaloon, Harlequin, and Columbine, and it will be completed after it is hung in the flies, whence it descends through a cleft in the floor of the painting-room to its proper place on the stage. Those bearded gentlemen, sitting on tall steps, and hard at work at the canvas, are engaged on other scenes, where elementary cascades, bowers, rustic lanes and sylvan glades are appearing with a marvellous rapidity, and a precision and effective breadth of touch, that causes you to wonder no longer how it is that some of our greatest artists have been scene-painters during some part of their career. The rule of this Art workshop is silence, and it is possible that should you address any observation to the gentleman who is walking over the acre of canvas, he would not hear you, so

absorbing is his occupation. Nobody has time even to dine here, except by occasional references to a plate and a pewter pot which stand somewhere on a convenient chair, or a ledge, within reach. Word has already come up that the set scene must be down in an hour, and on the stage you may have noticed a great creaking of ropes and pulleys, a series of unintelligible cries, and the tendency of all kinds of substantial trees and rocks to retire altogether in favour of some equally natural object, the sudden approach of which, without any perceptible agency, is unspeakably confusing. It is on the floor beneath, however, that the magic spell begins to work. When having passed along a passage, where a great hose, twining like a leather serpent, and great brass cocks and couplings at various intervals, suggest the constant provision against fire. Here, in a wild dream of all the fairy tales and hobgoblin stories known to childhood, you become acquainted with the realities of dramatic art; the mysteries of the banquet where great parcel gilt goblets and silver flagons; regal salvers and festal chaplets are flung about in reckless profusion. It is customary to wonder whether there is real wine in these costly vessels; whether real loaves and collars of brawn crown the festive board; and above all, whether the Clown ever has a genuine goose in those capacious 'trunks,' where he stows away so much miscellaneous property. A still greater wonder is in store for you, a wonder that will correct the vulgar notion, which assures you, that 'none of the things look real when you're close to 'em.' Remember you have to do with the very perfection of the art at Drury Lane, and that when an order comes up—say for a batch of bread for the baker, in 'Hop o' my Thumb'—the loaves must be true to the scale and best households. Here they are close to you on a table, and you know that you thought they were real half-quartern bricks sent in for the teas of the carpenters and scene-shifters. Take one in your hand and squeeze it, and you shall find it *crinch* in the crust just like real

bread, and that its well-baked cakey look, albeit it is made only of coloured canvas, gives you a positive appetite. The same with those chickens and ducks (canvas-backed ducks) ready skewered for the Brobdignag kitchen: they are old stagers brought out afresh, and only want flouring in the manner of the poulterer of real life. There is a good deal of this kind of repairing going on. Five-and-forty ballet skirts out of the two hundred or so on the shelves must be French chalked and puff-powdered, and the blue and gold trimming renovated for the Great Dance of Water Lilies and Forget-me-nots in the Pork-pie Island scene; while for the same admirable episode, half a dozen black and white grunTERS are rapidly becoming shapely, on wire frames, inside which as many juvenile supers will be introduced to scuttle across the stage at the right moment. Do you see this drawing? It represents a big bumble bee, and has just been brought here by an eminent artist who has the designing of the dresses and costumes for the great performance.

Of all the men who ever lived, surely that bright cheery-looking gentleman who takes up the drawing and looks at it is the most equable. He has no notion of difficulties, not a bit of it, for he is in fact the chief necromancer in this wonderful fable world, though he is in the homely guise of an apron and shirt sleeves, and takes a bite of toast and a sip of cold cocoa as aids to reflection. By to-morrow a big representation of the bumble bee will lie on the floor, composed of wicker-work, yellow plush, crape, bugles, and gauze. All but the legs, and these will be supplied by long, black worsted stockings covering the arms and legs of the agile youth who, personating the industrious insect celebrated by Doctor Watts, frisks in this neat framework at the feet of Little Boy Blue, as he helps the Queen to eat her bread and honey in the royal parlour.

Do you want the four-and-twenty blackbirds? *Here they are, all ready, in such a pie as makes your

mouth water, in anticipation of its being opened, when they will all begin to sing, by means of artfully-concealed whistlers at the wings. Is it Robinson Crusoe? there is his parrot, a truculent bird, only waiting for an intelligent supernumerary to flap his wings, and be careful not to show too much human leg underneath his plumes. Grim above all, towering over suits of armour, sheep, phantom horses, crocodiles with expressive tails, spears, hatchets, barrels, enormous gooseberries, stacks of vegetables, flowers, each of which will expand and show a fairy in its inmost petal; stripped corpses of slain warriors, bleeding sawdust at the knee-joints; legs of mutton, ribs of beef, effigies of police constables standing stark and grim in bye corners, giant crockery, formidable pokers, pipes that would fit the capacious mouth of Polyphemus; tinder-boxes that would, and perhaps do, hold twin babies—every kind of extravagance that a weird imagination can devise—above them all huge decapitated heads scowl and grin. The retainers of Huglymug the Second; the clansmen of MacHorror, the tartan-clad chieftain of the Grampians; the false courtiers of the cruel king; the senile advisers of the idiotic usurper; the comic warriors, who come in grim and silent, but mop and mow their satisfaction, when Prince Dumpylegs consigns the Silver Lily to the lowest dungeon of the castle keep. There they all are;

and it is dreadful how distorted a resemblance some of them bear to real faces seen and known outside the magic precincts. Do you see that quiet gentleman sitting at the deal bench yonder—whisper low—he is the arch-conjuror of the realm of grotesque; see him take up that lump of clay and fashion it as a buttermilk would pat up a pound of the best fresh: watch him as he scrapes, and smacks, and pares, and pinches, till lo, there comes the rudiment of a face in the great mass; the features, the lineaments, the face itself. Now look round you: these plaster casts are matrixes of those ogglesome visages that you just now gazed upon. Strip after strip of soaked brown paper pressed closely upon them until they are covered with a smooth wet mask of papier mâché; that mask dried and covered with a fine sheet of paper, and the whole coloured, varnished, wigged, and fitted to a super; now you see the way of it; but, having seen, do you feel that Huglymug and his crew are unreal? Not a bit of it; you would not like to be in this room after dark, and you know it. Hush! come along. The conjuror has his work to do, and it is of little use to speak to him; for he is putting the finishing touch to the great work of the season, at Drury Lane;—the masks of her Majesty's servants. He himself is one of the mysteries, though half London knows his necromantic name—Dykwynkyn.



THE BALLET-GIRLS OF PARIS.

I MADE the acquaintance, not long since, of a dashing young Frenchman, who, with a very fair stock of brains and a very good heart, yet was foolish enough to plume himself on being 'a man about town.' He was possessed of good looks and a reasonable fortune, was inveterately lazy, and just about as moral as Frenchmen on the average are. The intimacy with which that fellow knew Paris, from palace to garret, was wonderful; and I managed, during the brief period I was accidentally thrown with him, to glean much of which I was not informed before.

Among other haunts Paul was especially fond of the green-room and its divinities. His position and money gave him ready access to them; and I implicitly believe that he was on easy terms with half the ballet-corps of the metropolis. It was his description of these ballet-girls, their profession, their mode of life, their characters, and their training, which particularly struck me; and he so freely imparted his information that I have quite a stock of it in my head which I am anxious to put to paper. Well, thanks to Monsieur Paul, I arrived at the knowledge of this fact: that the Paris ballet-girls, in their motives for pursuing the saltatory art, in their mode of life, in their characters, and in their morals, are as various as all the rest of labouring and ambitious mankind; that virtue and good motives are not wanting, though they are vastly outweighed by their opposites; and that in each ballet-girl there is an individual, different life, quite recognizable from all the others. It is a mistake, it appears, to consider the ballet-girls as usually ignorant and low-born; many are very decently educated, the children of 'poor, but respectable parents,' and very few have been born so low in life as to have been set to manual labour; so that their company, though, if a man has any notions of morality at all (which many Frenchmen have not), it is excessively corrupting, is not

always coarse, or unrelieved by the graces of wit and sprightly conversation.

Among others whom Paul mentioned as his acquaintances in the ballet, was a Mdle. Rose F——, whose name used to appear on the bills of one of the great scenic theatres, a year or two ago, as taking the principal ballet rôles. I will give her story, as I recollect it, from his narrative, for it is an excellent one for illustrating the mode of life which very many of the first actresses and dancers in Paris lead. Mdle. Rose F—— was the daughter of a poor music-master, who gave lessons on sundry instruments to the children of the bourgeois in the Quartier Montmartre. His family consisted of a son and this daughter, the mother dying very soon after the latter's birth. Of course the music-master was on good terms with several dancing-masters. Among others he was intimate with a certain little Monsieur Dupin, an excellent teacher, and well remembered still among a highly respectable circle of Parisian families. Dupin was instructor and ballet-manager in one of the great scenic theatres. The two became cronies, and, as F—— was really a good musician, Dupin would often get him to lead a choice half-dozen who supplied the music at the soirées given by the former to his pupils. He repaid the service by giving little Rose dancing-lessons. She was a very bright and exceedingly pretty girl, and at thirteen was the best pupil Dupin had. She was passionately fond of the art, and was always practising it at home on the intricate steps. Her brother was conscripted into the army of Italy, in 1859, Rose being then in her sixteenth year, perhaps, and was killed on the glorious day of Solferino. In less than a year the father followed him to the grave, and Rose was left alone in the world, with little fortune and herself to take care of. Little dancing-master Dupin was a kind soul. He had always liked his best pupil, and now

interested himself in her. The result of his advice was that she went into the ballet, got an excellent chance at the theatre of which he was ballet-manager, and in two years rose to the very top of her profession. Meanwhile watchful little Dupin died, and Rose was alone again, but with plenty of means this time to take care of herself. She fell, as most of them do. She never had had a mother to warn her; her ballet sisters were mostly fallen, and talked of it freely; it was no sin in her eyes; it was an everyday thing all about her; she did not look upon it as falling. But she did not fall before a common temptation—not that she was too moral, but because she was too proud. Her first and, as far as Paul knew, her only lover, was a rich, wild young man, of high title, the son of a dignitary at the imperial court, a luxurious liver, and lavishly generous of his money. He became enamoured of her at the theatre, and followed her up till he got her, which he did the easier as he was strikingly handsome, and a man of decided wit and accomplishments.

When Paul made her acquaintance she was living in gorgeous apartments, a little out of town, toward Vincennes, which her *ancient* had provided for her, and where he visited her. Everything in these apartments was on a most luxurious scale—curtains of damask, and carpets of velvet, and furniture of the richest mahogany and silk garnishments. Her boudoir might have been a queen's; and it was here invariably (after the easy fashion of Madame du Barri) that she received her morning or day guests. Her dining-hall (room, Paul said, would be much too humble a term to apply to it) was richly furnished with lounges and huge marble-top sideboards and buffets, and with a long balcony which looked off upon Vincennes Castle, sheltered by an expansive awning. Her income from the theatre, amounting to several hundred francs a week, together with her allowance from the Comte de B—, enabled her to support a sort of demi-regal state, and were sufficient to provide feasts

of Roman lavishness and Parisian variety. Among the *habitués* of her apartments were young men of the highest families in France; and Paul said that she was wont to boast that a prince of royal blood had once honoured her with a *tête-à-tête* in her boudoir; 'And he was quite respectful, I assure you,' she would say, in defence of her constancy. 'The Count never had any reason to be jealous;' and incredulous Paul believed her. Mdlle. Rose was in the habit of rising at about ten, and at eleven was ready to receive her visitors. At half-past twelve she took breakfast, and if she had any company when the meal was announced, she would partake of it while they were sitting by. At two her own private dancing-master came to give her lessons; and at three she rode out to the Bois de Boulogne, with a sumptuous carriage and span of horses, provided by the Count, and stabled in the vicinity. On rehearsal-days of a new piece, however, she would breakfast an hour earlier, and go to the theatre from one till three, taking her ride afterwards. At five she dined always with guests, male and female, and, leaving her guests at the house, would depart for the theatre at half-past six. On returning from the play at midnight, she invariably partook of a sumptuous supper, rarely retiring until between two and three in the morning; and twice or thrice a week these midnight suppers would be attended by a number of picked friends, for she was nothing less than magnificent in her hospitality. The company which was wont to assemble at her feasts was of a miscellaneous character, all being men and women of the world, however, and high livers in their various spheres. There were dashing young men of family, leading actors from the various first-class theatres, members of the opera corps, artists and musicians of vivacity and talent, theatre-managers, young editors and critics, playwrights—in short, quite such a group as is to be found in the green-rooms, on the first production of a 'stunning' piece; while the female guests were

mostly of one class, actresses, prima donnas, and especially the more interesting of the ballet-sisters of the hostess. Paul (who used often to attend these suppers) once saw the queen of the *café concert*, Thérèse, there; but it was a rare case, the *café concerts* being usually quite beneath the notice of the corps of the great theatres. The entertainment on these occasions was much such an one as is given by the wealthy man or woman of fashionable society; and, to do Mdlle. Rose justice, there were no grosser improprieties than take place in all fashionable gatherings of French society in the middle class. There was card-playing, dancing, various games, promenading; often recitations of poetry, or readings from plays; sometimes little dramas acted; and the hostess herself, who was full of frolic, would frequently indulge her company with witnessing a new *pas seul*, just before it was brought out on the stage. At the supper wine was used freely and the company sometimes became uproarious; but there was no more license ever. One of the best features of the entertainment was often music, performed by a select club, all of whom were *habitués* of Mdlle. Rose's soirées. The conversation was, of course, exceedingly free—what one would expect to hear in the society of the loosest class in the world, the Paris theatre professionals; yet there was much wit in the company, which partly relieved it. In fine, it was a gay, exciting, feverish life, one continual round of pleasure and dissipation, and one which would be very apt to wear the liver out in the course of a short time. Mdlle. Rose became slothful and careless in her profession, as an effect of this too high life; she was late at rehearsals; she made some mortifying mistakes before the audience; she became indifferent to her triumphs; and what added to her discouragement was the peremptory departure of Comte de B—, who had about ruined himself in funds, to a foreign country, as Attaché of Legation, sent by his father, to separate him from too expensive associations. Mdlle. Rose sold out her gorgeous furni-

ture, gathered her funds together, ran away from Paris, leaving a multitude of debts behind, and confidentially told her intimates that she was off for Italy. 'And where she is now,' said Paul, 'nobody seems to know.' We can easily guess, however, that the life of such an one will either not be long, or will drag itself out in misery to the end.

In the same sumptuous and exhausting way live many of the upper crust of actresses, songsters, and dancers in Paris. One has her villa at Montreuil, another her cottage in Switzerland, where they pass the summer months and indulge in romantic retirement with their lovers—for all have lovers. Among the gay and brilliant throng which one sees on the afternoon of a spring or summer day, whirling in every sort of vehicle up and down the Champs Elysées and in and out among the enchanting paths of the Bois de Boulogne, many are actresses and dancers, who rival the first ladies of Paris in dress and equipage, and who fearlessly brave the sneers of the *beau monde* in thus mixing with them in the democratic pleasures of riding. They may be seen, too, on their 'off nights,' seated in all the glory of satin and peach and rouge, in the stage boxes of other theatres, smiling graciously on their sister performers on the stage, and aiming their mother-of-pearl lorgnettes at the more striking figures of the audience before them. They are prominent at the races and reviews, always paying well for the best places, and always appearing in the very top of the fashion. They are careless and reckless in money matters; their generous salaries melt as fast as they come, and their lovers seldom issue from the connection without very material loss of fortune. All the vices and accomplishments of the 'fast' men are these women's as well. You have doubtless heard of those scandalous orgies which have been accustomed to take place annually on one of the islands of the lake and the Bois de Boulogne. A certain Paris club gives a kind of night pic-nic and feast on the island, at which are present all the more

brilliant spirits of the *demi-monde*, and the leaders of the *demi-monde* are the principal actresses and *danseuses* of Paris. The stories which are told of these occasions are shocking to the morals of a man who has any to shock, and need not be repeated. It is sufficient to say that it is an orgy in which license has full play, and in which all sorts of doings are in order. And from it, at daybreak, many of these fine 'ladies' who appear so brilliantly in the Champs Elysées, are carried home in a state of boisterous, often of helpless intoxication.

What a picture of Parisian life and the utter callousness to all decency does this present! The affair on the island has become so notorious and so crying an evil, however, that I believe it will be prohibited in future by the authorities. The average of life among this class of women is, of course, short, and few of them long survive the zenith of their theatrical fame and fortune. Some do, nevertheless, and these sometimes are strong enough to turn from their destructive mode of life and become quiet and toiling members of society.

Paul told me of one who had, six or eight years ago, been one of the wildest and most reckless of her order, who was now a very proper landlady of thirty, keeps a highly respectable hotel in the region of the Chaussée d'Antin, and sticks smartly to her new vocation.

'No one would ever guess,' said he, 'that she had ever been anything except a keeper of an hotel.'

Another, after a career of dissipation and prodigal expenditure, had all of a sudden been dismissed from her theatre for careless dancing, and married a young mercer, who had long tried to get her, settling steadily down to the assistance of her husband in his business.

But these cases are very rare; the usual road of these poor creatures after their day of success is a very steep inclined plane; they commit suicide, or become inebriates, or insane, or adopt the worst of all professions. I have myself seen a poor old woman, long crazed, feeble in body,

going about the streets with a guitar which had lost all its strings but one, and singing, in a horribly cracked voice, snatches of the old songs of forty years ago. She was once, they tell me, a renowned singer in Paris, and had sung more than once before old King Charles the Tenth in the Tuileries; had led a dissipated and reckless life; had lost her high place in her profession, and with it her reason; and now imagined herself still the favourite of the multitude, and the songs she sings the delight of all who hear them. People give her a sou here and there, and pass pitying on; and the moving wreck still fails to warn the other thoughtless ones from the rock on which it shattered. Many of these actresses and *danseuses* come to the ground 'gently.' They avoid the abyss of utter destruction, and yet do not have to find another way of getting a livelihood. It is mostly the very proud and sensitive who, like Lucifer, fall utterly. But some who have enjoyed a first-class reputation, and have been the heroines of the Paris stage, see the foolishness of that pride which destroys, and when their star is dimmed, and others take their wonted place, do not rush off in despair and kill themselves or plunge into degradation. These, looking at their position in a common sense way, when they have to give up the best places, take the best they can get, keeping steadily at their profession. For instance, the principal actress of a theatre becomes a trifle *passée*; a rival comes along, and she is ousted. Well, if she is one of the sensible sort of whom I speak, she goes out into one of the provincial French cities, plays the first-class rôles to which she has become accustomed in Paris, and is announced as the 'distinguished Madame Soandso, from such a Paris theatre.'

On her past reputation she is able to keep up an excellent series of engagements in the provincial theatres; and she has now come to learn the necessity of saving, and is quietly laying by a comfortable 'pile' for a rainy day. When the 'distinguished - artiste-from-Paris'

dodge is a little 'played out,' she descends to the second-rate parts in the plays, becomes, perhaps, the regular *attachée* of a provincial theatre; until, when she has drawn at last into the broad proportions and matronly air of middle age, we find her taking such parts as the 'mother of the family,' 'the maiden aunt,' 'the pompous housekeeper,' or 'the tyrannical head milliner;' in fact, the rôles of the 'old women.' Thus, as I said, she falls to the ground from her once dazzling height easily, hardly perceiving the gradual downward steps, and very reasonably satisfied with her well-filled bank account, the preservation of her health and her profession.

But I have not spoken of the many young ballet-girls whose life is one continuous drudgery; whose pay is hardly enough upon which to subsist; who have to be drilled to exhaustion in rehearsals before appearing on the stage at night; who live in garrets and in the midst of loathsome *quartiers*, and are worn to death before they have arrived at womanhood. These are the mass—the indistinguishable multitude which one sees on the boards—who dance in groups, and never hear the separate applause of the audience for a well-executed *pas seul*. The lives of many of these are daily tragedies of want, and shame, and disappointment; for even these creatures have ambition to be famous as devouring as Cæsar's.

They are pitiable, most pitiable, for they have not the light of education; wickedness was the household god of their infancy, and they are all in moral darkness deep as Erebus. To these is forbidden the luxury in which their more eminent sisters revel, unless, perchance, Nature has given them, too, the ability to win, and fortune the chance. What becomes of all these gauzy nonentities of the ballet? Where are all those who flitted blithely across the stages of Paris in years gone by? We hear of them here and there, few and far between—in hospitals, in streets begging, or worse, in asylums, in gaols, at the solemn little Morgue by the banks of the Seine—very rarely that we do not hear of them in places of misery, in the sombre realms of wretchedness. Their lives are frail and brittle, and break often under their burdens. A certain countess, some years ago, a pious Catholic and a noble woman, devoted herself to seeking these same poor worn-out girls of the ballet, put them into comfortable sick-rooms, sent them to school, and herself taught and comforted and tended them; and the few thus saved by the single hand of a woman directed by God grew up and did well, and died good deaths, or lived to be witnesses of the goodness of their benefactress. Would that a dragon's teeth could be sown whence they might grow such women!



LADY LILY.

A WAY from London's dirt I am,
 I've Harwich left, and Rotterdam
 For land of sauerkraut and ham;
 But still to Piccadilly
 My thoughts occasionally steal |
 By far a swifter route than Lille,
 For there disconsolate I feel
 Is sighing Lady Lily.

I've wandered wearily alone
 Through countless aisles of sculptured stone
 Which render fabulous Cologne;
 My broken heart recovers
 Along the swiftly-flowing Rhine,
 For there in each 'Ich denke dein'
 Are whispered histories like mine
 In tales of love and lovers.

Farewell at last to cockney cads,
 To Bonn and Heidelberg, whose lads
 Persuade me 'going to the Bads'
 Would better my condition.
 I find myself at little Ems,
 While Lily sits at home and hams,
 Or plucks young rosebuds from their stems—
 Too fascinating mission.

I knew in Lily's eyes there lay
 A far too tempting love of play,
 Which makes me consequently say
 They lured me to my ruin.
 I'm not myself at all, you know,
 But led in silken cords to show
 How gentle Beauty takes in tow
 A fierce and shaggy Bruin.

My love suggested all my luck,
 I played for Lily and with pluck,
 I dreamed of coral lips and stuck
 To red, and red was winner;
 So on to hair and sparkling eyes
 My fond imagination flies,
 To find in black a great surprise
 Of fortune for a sinner!

Ah! shapely maiden to your waist
 These truant arms desire to haste,
 Or tremble near you while I traced
 A sketch of idle rambles.
 For then alone I'd dare to ask
 If Lily'd peep from out her mask,
 And undertake that solemn task
 Of curing one who gambles.



LADY LILY.

[See the Verses.]

POPPIES IN THE CORN;

OR, GLAD HOURS IN THE GRAVE YEARS.—No. X.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE,' &c.

WINTER TIME, AND TWELFTH NIGHT.

IT is surely a pleasant disposition, that which most naturally and readily turns to pleasant things. Which of us does not know by experience the difference of disposition,—the opposite manner of regarding the same things (that yet seem so different from different points of view) which in greater or less degree divides men into two classes? Some men and women have a certain tonic influence,—not only that of sympathy, which is a power so potent to 'lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,' but the knack of setting life's bright events in a yet brighter light: its sadnesses in a less impervious gloom. Daylight becomes Sunshine in their society; darkest night begins to sparkle with stars. That cheery Dutchman who fell from the mast-head of his vessel was surely one of this genial class. His shipmates crowding round him with long faces to condole with his broken leg: but startled to find the man in high glee and spirits because it was not his neck! Verily, there are two ways of looking at things. There are those, in the journey of life, who are busy picking out all the puddles and rotten places in their road. These find success easy enough in their search. There are those also who have a firm conviction that, with a little picking their way, they may light upon fair travelling. And it is wonderful how many dry spots these find out in the very road which to a companion seemed ankle-deep in mud. Life has its sadnesses; and they must be endured; nay, reverently welcomed: even as, in truth, blessings hardly in disguise. For we are but at school here, and hard tasks and chastenings are one part, and that, perhaps, the most useful part of our training. But the holidays and the half-holidays come, and may

be enjoyed, if we will enjoy them; and the thought of yesterday's correction or to-morrow's task need not check that blithe 'Hurrah!' and burst out, with stumps or football, into the sunny playground, or into the summer field.—And I have seen sometimes the dry chalk cliff, or the heap of bleak stones, crested even with the jet and scarlet of a tossing of poppy-banners.

How different your face after a good bite at a sloe-berry in November from its expression after making your teeth meet in a Moor Park apricot! And how different is your feeling when you contemplate the spider sucking away the unlovely life of the blue-fly that always haunted disagreeable places and sought out unpleasant things from that with which you note the splendid wings fluttering forlorn and bodiless in the web, that remind you of a bright life most at home in the sunshine, and having a natural affinity with heliotropes and geraniums and all sweet and lovely things!

And as, in selecting one's friends, we should prefer to select from the baskers against south walls, and the haunters of summer plots, rather than from the iron-pear class, or the offal-seeking-fly class, so also in our willing choice of memories and subjects for quiet musings. Is it not a relief to turn from those dark days, from those bitter hours which, like useful but nauseous drugs, are stored on memory's shelves, and to take out samples rather from her stores of sweet preserves and dried fruits? Apricot-days that once swelled round and full upon the summer wall, but that, dried and shrunken, yet retain their old sweetness, and much of their rare flavour. Strawberry-hours that, in the early year, tempted, square and yellow-seeded, scarlet-ripe on the

bods: serving for a bite at the time, but also stored by the careful housewife, Memory, to come out in life's winter days,—not with the same vivid colour, not with the same choice aroma,—still whole strawberries bedded in the jam (like that Mammoth in the Siberian ice), still redolent with true strawberry flavour, and able to call up before us the things that once were: the ripe and luscious pleasures, the jewel-fruit on the leafy summer bed.

Well, thus I have passed, rather faithlessly, from poppies to dried fruits, in my similitude. But the season must be my excuse: who can call up the summer-flowers over the rugged brown corn-lands, hardened into very rock for a while under the sway of the first sharp frost of winter? So the old winter-delights which it pleases now to recall shall for the nonce be regarded as preserved fruits rather than as 'poppies spread.'

Winter time. Yes, we need not look far for pleasant things in these days—for jam to take life's powders in. I confess to a love for the time,—when once we have settled down to it. You winced a little as you saw it coming: the thinning trees, the pinched garden, the dark mornings (for that old delight of the sunlight flooding the blinded rooms at five o'clock in the morning), the cold *cold* bath, the shivering railway journey from town after the business was done for the short day; the iron roads, ghostly with streaks of arrested snow; the haze freezing into icicles on your whiskers and side-hair. You winced a little as you saw it coming. But it is here, and you are soon at home with it. It is bracing, exhilarating weather;—bracing to step out of the glowing bed into the bath with a skin of ice on the top, and then the rough rub, tingling and smoking all over, with a pardonable elation at having daringly snatched the fearful joy, and feeling that it is now over for twenty-four hours. It is stirring to emerge from the just warming breakfast-room into the ringing street, and to spin along at the rate of some five miles an hour,

regardless of slow omnibuses that loom out of the frosty haze, and with slipping horses and blue-nosed passengers, carefully creep along the polished, wrinkled road. How soon you are warm as a toast! Cooking yourself now at the back, now at the front, now on this side, now on that, at the white-hot fire, you never could have got warmed right through, as now you are for the day. How the boys invent impossible slides everywhere: how the cabmen beat their arms: and the sleighs speed by with the tinkle of their bells—

Silver bells,
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars that over sprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.'

But this will be when you come back in the early evening: there are no stars now, only a round orange orb, shorn of its beams by the frore, mist-hazed air, no more resplendent with glorious rays, simply a dull, red-hot ball. The haze has settled into white feathers, or otherwise abstended, by when the office lights are out, and you are on your homeward route again; and now how coldly, fathomlessly clear the heavens are; and how the keen stars almost pierce you with their pointed glitter. Everybody is bustling and alive; the frost quickens every one's pace and every one's digestive powers; there are special wintry cries and shouts and noises: the shops flare out sheets of kindly warm light across the ice-bound streets: the grocers' windows gain confidence, ruddy oranges and pale lemons and heaps of dried fruit coming in with the coming Christmas time; and if the fruiterers are now at some disadvantage, yet they make a brave fight of it with the pyramids of dry-skinned apples, russet, and vermeil-streaked, with the big Jersey chaumontels, and the piles of smooth full chestnuts;

with here and there, on an upper story, a pine or two, with the muffled orange of its cone, and the muffled green of its leaves, flanked with light vases crowned with vivid rose-geraniums, or with full chrysanthemum snow ('Virgin Queen,' or 'Empress of India'). But you spin by, warm as a toast, and one-idea'd as an express train; until you spring lightly up the steps, and, startling night with your vehement knock, are received, warm, into warm arms, and a warm room, and settle down, glad at heart, for a snug long winter evening.

I must still linger on this theme of the winter program, before I go on to my twelfth-cake reminiscences. There are the winter flowers—the one or two—how precious, in the dearth of these throngers of God's world! The Christmas rose:—why is it not more grown? The large beautiful stars, so tenderly tinged with green, developing one after one on the frosty beds, out of the dark fingered-leaves. So lovely, too, when they are gathered, and you have set them, looking upward, at equal intervals in the moss and ferns along the zinc trough which rims round the font at Christmas. Then, indoors, the thick snow of the camelias, or their cherry blush out of the glossy rich green; and the frail and delicate azaleas, salmon or grey-white: and, ripening into colour; ash into blue, fawn into pink, green into clustered lovely large bells,—the hyacinths in their glasses; aconites arrested on the curl, by the renewed frost; snowdrops, always held among our dearest flower-friends; crocus, golden-yolked or purple-hearted; scattered clear yellow stars of the winter jasmine. We prize them much because they are beautiful: more, because they are few.

Winter music: that also is prized, because it is rare, as well as for its sweetness. How much more you notice and rejoice in the clear bold song of the speckled thrush, on the winter day, than you will do when the woods are alive with song. And the low liquid pathos of the faithful woodlark, singing on the rimed bough, or while skimming the snow-powdered fields: how it touches

you, like a friendly voice at a time when you lonely thought yourself neglected and forsaken by all the world. Our darling robin, he must just be mentioned; there needs no more to call up before us at once his warm breast and dark eye, and to light up the winter evening with the clear starlight of his song.

But indoors we have other singers, other minstrelsy. Unless we have been married too long, the wife, or, if we have been married long enough, the girls, draw out sundry broad sheets from the portfolio, or dive after certain green or yellow MS. books, and open the piano. Ah! yes, there is a charm in those long winter evenings, who will not admit, that loves reading, and music, and the sweet society of home? Luxurious man, free to-night from all engagements; not required to drive forty miles in a dog-cart, in the teeth of the north-easter, to tea at Miss Allbutt's; nor bound to-night to take a class at the night-school (if a philanthropist); nor, if a parson, about to sally forth for a six-mile trudge through the half-melting sleet, and across the bleak moor to the cottage-service:—instead of these, the long delicious evening, with Tennyson's new poem to read, and silver alto and golden soprano feasting your soul to-night to the full; and you revel in Mendelssohn's 'O wert thou in the cold blast!'—and rejoice to think that, on the contrary, you are tucked up before a singularly boisterous fire; you grow pensive over 'Oft in the still night,' or 'The last rose of summer,' old favourites which never pall: you awaken up a little more intellect to enjoy Beethoven's 'Adelaide,' you desire and obtain the Autumn song (more properly and suitably the winter song), written by Hood, and married to music by H. F. L. (Oh, I am conferring a boon on *music* lovers by naming it; and I will add, for their behoof, that Robert Cocks, I believe, was the publisher)—a song so suitable to our train of thought, that (as the custom is now-a-days) I will enliven our grave reading with the light fountain-glitter of singing. Stir the fire, and stand with your back to it, and hear the sweet win-

ter-singing give the lie to the sweet song; for have you not an aviary of your own, for all the winter cold? and are not the sweet birds in full choir to-night?

'The Autumn skies are flushed with gold,
And fair and bright the rivers run;
—These are but streams of winter cold,
And painted mists that quench the sun.

'In secret boughs no sweet birds sing,
In secret boughs no bird can shroud;
These are the leaves that take to wing,
And wintry winds that pipe so loud.

'Tis not trees' shade, but cloudy glooms
That on the cheerless valleys fall:
The flowers are in their grassy tombs,
And tears of dew are on them all.'

Delicious! Of course you call for Inez and the rest of the set of six. Where is this delicious melodist? and why is his muse so chary—not to say, stingy? Let me, at least, take this occasion of tendering him public thanks. Let me commend as fit bridegrooms for his subtle melodies, Matthew Arnold's 'Requiescat,' and Robert Browning's 'One way of love.'

But at the very heart of the winter time glows Christmas, the kindly time, the genial time, the time of meetings renewed, and partings remembered. For we most of all realize the communion of saints at Christmas-time. Then it is that we gather together again: the living from all parts of the land: also the dead with quiet eyes from Paradise; and each gathering, unless it be of the very young, has its vacant chair—has its stiller guest—

'—Perchance, perchance, among the rest,
And, though in silence, wishing joy.'

Let me pause for a moment to taste the luxury of sadness. Ah! they are gone—they are gone—gone before, and the bitterness is that we seem so much to forget, to do without them. Then we therefore *love* the recurring festal days—Christmas: the birthday: the wedding-day, which, with its 'In memoriam,' breaks in upon our absorbed life—which bows our head in a convulsion of tears upon the last feebly-pencilled letter, the faint marks in the book that comforted them in those days of weaning from earth's besetments. I say, we rejoice at some

'compelling cause to grieve,' which may vindicate us from the imputation of dull-hearted oblivion. Ah! we *hate* ourselves sometimes, to think how we *seem* to have almost forgotten: how the merry word or the light laugh seems, just as when those dear ones could hear it, upon the surface of the soul; how life goes on, just as though they had not slipped out of it: the old home ones, the guardians of our childhood, the companions of our youth—one by one turning on us loving eyes of last farewells! and then—forgotten? No, no, vehemently no. 'Tis this bustling, hustling life of ours, 'tis the constant pressure upon us of new cares, considerations, problems of life: 'tis the crowding of circumstances upon us that is to blame:

'Like children bathing on the shore,
Buried a wave beneath,
The second wave succeeds, before
We have had time to breathe.'

But the quiet days come—times when the tide is down, and its low murmur is muffled in the distance; holidays—rather, holy days in life's turmoil—times when they used to be with us: times when we reassure our hearts by finding that indeed we miss them still—that we are faithful to the old loves—that the blank has never really been filled up with the new writing, or that at least the old characters are distinct, distinct, distinct, unobliterated, undimmed, upon the palimpsest of our heart. Dear reminding days! and we love no laughter really at all comparably with that hardly-controlled sob, that failing voice, that sudden mist of tears.

Unforgotten—unforgotten: yea, our leisure moments prove this, and avert our self-contempt—and satisfy the unforgetting love, that is eternal now, of faithful hearts in Paradise. And the peace of their face brightens, as with a sun-gleam on calm water, when some swift-flying angel stays the rush of his white wings beside them, to tell them that they are yet kept in mind, and that their special days are still sacred to their unfaded memory.

I saw, of all queer places, in a newspaper article, a rather subtle analogy, which was new to me, about Christmas gatherings. It connected it with that gathering, at the first Christmas time, of kinsmen with kinsmen, of friends with friends, each going up to his own city, called together at that time by Cyrenius. I don't know whether the thought would strike others as it struck me; but I thought it a curious and sweet foreshadowing of what I cannot but hold to be a special characteristic of the hallowed time, that drawing together of kinsmen with kinsmen, of friends with friends, each in the familiar place of his bringing up; or, if this be left behind in life's march, in that extempore 'home' which may nearest recall it. They laugh about us, a new one every year, the blossom faces of the children. But the old ones, the old home ones are still in their places. It is the time of gatherings, the time of forgivings, the time when the hearts' ice thaws beside the great Christmas fire. It *must* be so, if we would hold communion with the calm hearts that have done for ever with the jars, and the pettinesses, and the false pride, and the jealousies—all the little mean accidents of earth-life:

* In vain shalt thou, or any, call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst say,
My spirit is at peace with all.'

Well, one lingers always with a unique fascination about the theme of Christmas: Christmas bells, and Christmas greetings, even Christmas fare; Christmas boxes, Christmas fires, Christmas memories, Christmas reunions; Christmas hopes, and the great Christmas story. All has been said often, we almost admit, that can be said; still we never tire of saying and hearing the old things again. Christmas parties there are, too, and Christmas games, and the elders grow young again, and the young live in a sort of dreamland of unreal ecstasy. But these days soon go by, and what is there left to look forward to? Ah! there it is, as it were, a second rainbow, a little fainter than the first, but still a

dream-day for children, and boys and girls, and young men and young women:—shall I not include the elders while I am about it? There is yet the remnant of the Christmas merry-makings; the children have some parties yet in the future, which the elders shall attend, not uninterested, for auld lang syne; *these* have several more turkeys and plum puddings to discuss or to contemplate;—but above all, there is *TWELFTH NIGHT* to come, and who shall be king and who shall be queen! How excitedly shall the hearts of boy and girl lovers beat, as the smooth slips and the crinkled slips are handed round!

Twelfth Night: yes, one of the few holy days which are, as all should be, kept as holidays! (Let me suggest, by-the-way, how admirable a plan it would be universally to make them all so in the school-room.) Twelfth Night! Little, however, are the Eastern Star and the wise Kings with their gifts connected in most minds with the festivities of the day. This might be rectified, and a halo cast about the merriment which should rather enhance than dull its brightness. At present, how many children would not even know their gala day by the name of the Feast of the Epiphany!

Yet what a charm there is for us all in this fascinating story, which if not a part of the Christmas brightness, yet seems, as I said, to be a second rainbow, with the same soft tints, only somewhat less vivid—a paler Christmas day.

* Earth has many a noble city,
Bethlehem, thou dost all excel:
Out of thee the Lord from Heaven
Came to rule His Israel.

* Fairer than the sun at morning,
Was the star that told His birth,
To the world its God announcing,
Seen in fleshly form on earth.

* Eastern sages at His cradle,
Make oblations rich and rare;
See them give, in deep devotion,
Gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.'

Is there not an old child's charm about the story? The new star, bright and dazzling in the sky, and the Eastern astrologers—led by I know not what remnant or report of

prophecy, expecting even then the fulfilment—suddenly beholding its bright unique radiance one night or one day, and thereupon implicitly trusting themselves to its guiding. 'Can we not picture to ourselves the excitement and amazement in Jerusalem, as those travel-stained men entered into the city of David with the one question on their lips, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?"'

We wonder sometimes about them, they came so suddenly, and as suddenly disappear. And then we hear no more of them. What! did they return to their own land after that profound acknowledgment of the Infant, who, marvel of marvels, was indeed their God: and did all that wonderful Life and Death and Resurrection and Ascension, attract them no whit; nor cause them to make any sign? This were strange, that they should so earnestly seek at the beginning, and having so far found, subside into apathy. A common thing in poor human nature, this eager beginning and slack continuance. But we need not impute such lukewarmness to these Eastern kings; no; thirty years had passed before the Babe was anointed for the beginning of His ministry, and, doubtless, the sages were watching from another world the development and fulfilment of that course which they, almost alone among the world's millions, had perceived and sought out in its beginning.

Well, but now, leaving these deeper speculations, we turn to the keeping of this Feast of the Epiphany, this much-watched-for Twelfth-day, among our English boys and girls, yea, in the time of our own youth. It is the feast, I say, of boy and girl lovers, especially. And why? Well, we shall before long perceive the ground on which I build this assertion.

Only, by the way, we must remark upon how *real* this toy-love seems and is. Have we not at twelve to fourteen felt fiercest rapture, jealousy, despair? Have we no old pocket-book in which we treasured, ay, for years, the tattered gold of the cracker that she held

with us, the motto that leapt out to our share, the flower that she graciously gave us in an acquiescent hour;—possibly, yes, *possibly*, the brown or golden tress, whose granting quickened the ecstasy of our soul to almost delirium? Do we not still find sweetness in the magic touch of the lips, behind the rocking-horse, in the twilight, or even yet writhe with madness at our folly and chicken-heartedness in fearing and failing to snatch that intoxication from the pouting twelve-year old lips, that did (we perceive afterwards,) even challenge a taste of their wild-rose wealth?

Ah, what follies for a grave man to write about! Well; I know not, I see a tender beauty in the mimic (yet real) earnestness of the throbs and stings of that time of miniature and undeveloped manhood and womanhood. At any rate, I cannot describe Twelfth-day without it, for indeed the zest of this evening, especially and pre-eminently, arises from its connection with this boy and girl love-making.

But let us call up the Twelfth-night evening of long ago. It is to be at our own house: cleaning of rooms, preparing of good things, laying 'of supper-tables, these preliminaries (like the setting the bells before the peal) have kept up the somewhat more than gentle excitement all day. It grows keener and more irrepressible as five o'clock draws near, and the elder brother is expected from London—with the Twelfth-cake! And, lo! we hear his key in the front door, and the younger ones are dancing about him as he stamps off the snow and tediously rubs his boots on the mat. But a cry of delight has greeted the large square deal box that he has brought with him; and many tongues are eager with questions. 'Is it a large one?' 'Is it a pretty one?' 'What is the middle ornament?' 'Is there any curled citron in it?' 'What are the characters like?' To each and all of these interrogatories the brother preserves an unmoved and tantalizing silence, like Randolph Murray, in Aytoun's splendid 'Edinburgh after Flodden.' 'What a shame!' resounds

after his disappearance with the prize into the pantry; but there is consolation in having seen that the box was a big one. And presently the children are admitted to a sight of the sheet of characters and their cover, with its huge pictured twelfth-cake. Of course the characters are not pretty, nor even fairly comic; but they will serve their purpose. The only pretty ones I ever saw were a set of flowers; a flower to each character, which, on being raised, disclosed some fay of the court, and the fairy king and queen. Once only, however, I have met with this more graceful rendering. How much scope for elegant or witty thoughts might be found by some enterprising purveyor in this department of Art! And even a slight matter, if it be worth doing at all, is worth doing well. Let me give one or two suggestions. The court and principal men at any given time in English History. The characters in Shakespeare's plays. The Court of the Sleeping Beauty.

But my young people are busy enough cutting up the characters, whatsoever they may be, and folding them; smooth for the gentlemen; crimped for the ladies; these to be in a salver, those in a hat. And so the preparations are complete, and carriage load after carriage load of the *dramatis personæ* is set down; and mists of rose and white and grey muslins float about the rooms. Then before a thaw has set in, does the young Englishman behave as though frozen to his seat, or to some wall of the room; any pretence of being at his ease utterly forsakes him; his arms and hands seem impertinent excrescences; horrible dumbness comes upon him, and bashfulness overwhelms him, and he is bitterly conscious of looking exceeding foolish just where and when he most wished to appear at his wittiest and best. Alas! that when he has got rid of the dreadful consciousness of superabundant limbs, and has thawed from constraint and dumbness into ease and eloquence in the sunny presence and under the arch eyes — alas, that then the delightful evening must have an end, and the de-

licious familiar footing have given place to frigid awkwardness again by the next time that the amused girl and the self-hating youth shall meet.

But the games go on, and in the excitement of blind-man's-buff, or, 'How, when, and where,' or may be (graceful, I think, for the quite young), a country or other dance got up, the young people are soon at home with each other, and ready for the great event of the evening, which comes early, for very many of the party are tiny children. For them this great event of the evening is the throwing open the doors of the room where tea or supper is set out in glittering array — jellies trembling in every limb at this sack of the city, blanchmanges with all trace of colour fled from their cheeks, piles of noble oranges, lofty architectural sponge cakes (to be cut at the foundation), flat and luscious figs, large fleshy black plums, preserved cherries, yea, plates of rough candied fruits, green-gages, apricots, angelica; heaps of crackers everywhere, above all, a simply sublime Twelfth-cake.

So far as this writer is concerned, the time has long since passed when inclination and digestion went hand in hand to commend the consumption of that swart and heavy compound; rich deep mould, it seems, when you dig into it, through the stratum of thick snow at the top. Still, however, it pleases him much to contemplate the spectacle of a shop full of these cakes. The fine white covering; why, when we were young, were we restrained from the tempting morsel, it being represented to us as chalk? It is, maturer years reveal, but a harmless compound of sugar, drifted sugar, and white of egg. Then, the diversified fringe of papers which fence in the domain, and which afterwards serve as a crown for the (child) king and queen. The ornaments, again represented to us (alas, only too truly, too often!) as uneatable, but very fascinating to the juvenile mind. Ringlets of pink and green citron dividing the white surface into segments. In the old time, flat painted chalk houses, birds,

sailors, castles, cows, what not? but in later times semi-opaque sweetmeats filled with liqueur. Birds or butterflies trembling on spiral wire, over nests or flowers; slabs of pink or dull-white sugar in their gelatine envelopes; towering above all, the grandeur of the middle ornament! In extreme cases, a Parian statuette; but this is rather an innovation. A choice box of sweetmeats, surmounted by Father Christmas, or some other coloured figure—this seems the more orthodox adornment. What an event it used to be to us children, as doubtless it is to many others now, to find the year's array of cakes set out at the corner shop, Hassell's, the village confectioner, and to wonder which of them all would fall to our lot, sent by that beneficent friend whose delight it was to keep us almost weekly supplied with good things and toys! Rarely does such a benefactress fall to the lot of the small commonwealth of the schoolroom and nursery.

Well, the twelfth-cake this evening proves to be all that could be desired, and already many a bright eye has longingly scanned the noble centre-piece, which, of old custom, falls to the portion of the queen of the evening. Who will this be? Ah, who? It is not only the children whose hearts beat eagerly at the question. For if, oh if only Ethel *should* prove to be queen, and then if Edgar *could* but draw the character of king, why then, you see, there are certain kingly privileges, and Edgar is now thoroughly thawed, and, he feels, equal to the occasion. So the thrilling moment comes, the smooth slips and the crinkled slips are handed round; those who, spite of orders, surreptitiously peep at their fate or fortune, are rewarded by just disappointment; at last the word is given, and eager fingers are at work. Had no one drawn the queen? But one catches Ethel's look, smiling and demure, with colour a little heightened; 'O, Ethel is queen—Ethel is queen? And she holds up her magic lot. Who has drawn the king, then? For a moment they are on a wrong scent, and Harold is proclaimed as

monarch. But Edgar, with sparkling eyes, flushed face, heart violently thumping his white waistcoat, with triumphant look exhibits his credentials, and extinguishes his rival. 'Tis Ethel's turn to look shy now; she tries to abdicate her sovereignty on behalf of a youngling of nine years, but the united voice of her subjects compels her to retain her honours. How Edgar's heart had died down for a moment! But now his hour of triumph has come; Mistress Ethel cannot stand against the law of her kingdom, and the clamour of her subjects; the king also has gained courage which surprises himself; she leans towards him—half frowning, half laughing, all blushing, and—yes, incredible and ecstatic delight—their lips meet!

What a moment! followed by what an evening! Little sleep for either Harold or Edgar that night, be sure. Nay this absurdity is the fact—that the little enthusiast will, for at least the next day, carefully avoid washing the lips which were so ravishingly honoured. 'Little fools,' do you say? Well, well, I shall not chime in with your growl. I know myself that the ecstasies and despairs of that age are at the time real things enough. True, these loves will come to nothing. True, they are unset blossoms. But, for all that, I tell you that the memory of that evening will always, even into old age, be dear to the man who has at all kept the child's heart, without which maturity is deterioration. And, pish and pshaw it as you will, I aver that the triumph and the nectar of that boy and girl's kiss will ever be one of the sweetest and choicest of the refectations with which memory will spread the table on her gala days. I have much indeed to say about child-love. However, it is possible that I may develop the subject in some congenial February musings.

The crackers! While we are trifling away ten minutes with visiting these ghosts of those old selves, the innocent follies of old child-days, let us not forget the fun and the earnest of these. The nervousness of the pull, the miss-fire, the sharp-

crack, the unwieldy bonbon—and just the right motto, no doubt, for Ethel won't show it. However, Edgar finds means, in the course of the evening, to get a peep at it—and to improve the occasion. Here, again, let me parenthesize—since the amusement is pretty general, some more aptness, wit, and elegance might be applied to the mottoes. At present the best that I can recall is one suggested in the pages of 'Punch.'

* Accept these beauteous lumps of chalk and paint,
And eat them if you're silly.—Which you ain't !'

It is well to transfer the festivities of the evening also to the kitchen. Truly, masters and mistresses are not careful enough often to consider that below stairs there are the same capacities, the same needs for enjoyment; and to make the whole household one family as far as possible. There are some admirable remarks on this subject in 'Companions of my Solitude.' Our old home-custom has ever been to cut a goodly wedge of the cake, not forgetting to add some gleanings of the ornaments, and to crown sundry beakers with wine, and further, collecting a sufficiency of the characters, to transfer the merriment to the kitchen. Unless it were a regular party up-stairs, we children used to steal down also, and enjoy the repetition of excitement as to who should gain the royal dignity.

Indeed, I have by me a cutting which may be worth giving as a record of the innocent mirth of more old-fashioned times—times more simple and less prim, genial to remember, if not wholly advisable to emulate:—

'Yes' (an old friend wrote to me) 'yes, I recognized our juvenile reminiscences in your paper. Our dear niece and you were very tiny things on one occasion at Great Russell Street, when *she* declared—seeing the dining-room table glorious with toys and dolls and coins—"I never can be so happy again!" dancing round the board with delight. And do you remember, on Twelfth-night, all you children assembled when we drew characters, how (good, dear

Aunt Mary not taking precautions) *I* drew *King*, the very pretty nurse-maid chancing to get *Queen*—when, with a shout most joyous, to Aunt Mary's dismay, *you all* bore me along in triumph up-stairs to my partner, who rose to receive her regal lord; and how, overcoming my constitutional reluctance, I did king-like homage to her sweet, queenly fair cheek? Well, these were the merry days of yore.'

Ah, fie! grave and revered sir! Yet you plead that you were the creature of circumstances; so we will not be over hard on you.

Well, it is time that this, perhaps over-frivolous train of reminiscent musing should draw up to its terminus. Let me gradually put on the break, and gradually bring it to a standstill by the platform, that the passengers whom it has borne for a half-hour's journey may emerge from it, and disperse to their grave employments. But as we slacken speed, and you gather your books and parcels, let me remember a saying of Disraeli, the Adaptable. He happens to be, in this instance, toying with the Conservative mood. He says accordingly, contemplating the spirit of the day, the spirit which could, out of mere wantonness, not pausing to ask whether they were obstructive, or indeed well-placed, useful, ornamental—pluck up and root out venerable and far-spreading trees, for the sole reason that our forefathers had planted them, and that they had struck their roots deep in our soil—contemplating, I say, and deprecating this spirit, he reminds Englishmen that, 'notwithstanding the rapid changes in which we live, and the numerous improvements and alterations which we anticipate, *this country is still Old England*, and the past is one of the elements of our power.'

And I really think that the keeping up of innocent and genial old customs has its place in this wholesome conservatism which vainly now-a-days tries to stem the torrent of rabid novelty, change, uprooting of old things. The 'Delirium Tremens' newspaper, the 'Poll-mell Gazette,' Reviews, also, whose vision seems well labelled as included in.

the bound of a fortnight's foresight and a fortnight's retrospect—well, they have not *yet* started a proposal to borrow a custom from the East, and to kill our grandfathers, as well as murdering all that is of the almost sacred past. Ah! Cyril, my boy, you *may* live to see England a republic, and a hodgepodge of 'all denominations' in her ancient churches, as now they *have* crept into public toasts—nay, Mormonism, for all I know, the 'Established Church' of the land (everybody knows, now-a-days, that a church—having no essence, but being only a jumble of accidents—is makeable or destroyable at the sole fiat of a Parliament of, it might be, Romanists and Dissenters, Infidels and Jews), the 'present' Church having at least made a stand against the modest proposal to ar-

range a bench of bishops composed of the seven Essayists (but one of them is dead, and one a layman), and a few more such selections—the rising generation *may*, I say, see these and other strange sights; but I, at least, am too old-fashioned for them. I seem, however, to have brought my train of musings to an end with a shrill whistle—with a scroop and a creak.

Well, it is difficult to be patient with everything, to acquiesce in everything, in this day of 'improvements;' I shall, however, venture to be heretical enough to cling to old customs, ay, and old beliefs, none the less dearly and closely that they *are* old. And even 'the spray of life which I have been describing shall be confessed to owe half its dearness and delight in memory, to its connection with 'Auld lang syne.'



THE EARLY DAYS OF NAPOLEÓN III.

CHAPTER III.

THE frigate *Andromède*, in which Louis Napoléon embarked at Lorient on the 21st of November, 1836, did not land him in the United States until the 30th of March, 1837. Although set at liberty, for four long months he was kept in what Dr. Johnson called a prison with the chance of being drowned. The *Andromède* should have been rechristened the *Festina lente*—the Hasten Slowly—for he was taken to his destination with most leisurely speed. It was possibly for the benefit of his health that the sea voyage was prolonged to that extent. Once arrived in America, he was projecting a stay there and an attentive study of that remarkable country, when he received the following letter from his mother:—

'MY DEAR SON,—I shall soon have to undergo an operation which is absolutely necessary. Should it not succeed, I send you my blessing through the means of this letter. We shall meet again—shall we not?—in a better world, where you will come to rejoin me as late as possible, remembering that, in leaving this, I regret nothing but you—nothing but your affection, which has conferred on my life its only charm. For you, my dear friend, it will be a consolation to think that your kindness has rendered your mother as happy as she was capable of being. The thoughts of my love for you will give you courage.

'Think that the dwellers in another world ever keep an affectionate and watchful eye on those whom they have left in this. Assuredly, relations meet in heaven. Believe in this consoling idea; it is too indispensable not to be true. My dear friend, I press you to my heart. I am perfectly calm, completely resigned, and entertain hopes that we shall still see each other again in this world. God's will be done.

'Your tender mother,

'HORTENSE.

'This 3rd April, 1837.'

The course of his movements was

at once decided. He could not hesitate what step to take. As stated in the preceding chapter, he had entered into no engagement, made no promise, previous to embarking for the United States. He had simply yielded to force; and therefore had the right to return to Europe whenever he pleased, especially for the accomplishment of such a duty as the closing a mother's dying eyes. He fortunately arrived in time. He reached Arenenberg at the end of September, 1837, and Queen Hortense expired on the 5th of October following.

Louis Philippe's government, in their newspaper organs, had treated Louis Napoléon with ridicule and contempt, calling the Strasburg attempt a 'childish enterprise' and a 'foolish prank.' Now, however, they were seriously uneasy at his renewed residence in Switzerland, although he lived in the strictest retirement, mourning his irreparable loss. Contradicting their disdain for his 'boyish freaks,' they applied to the President of the Helvetic Republic to get him expelled from the federal territory. The President had the courage to reply that he saw no reason for obliging the Prince to leave Switzerland. In consequence, there came, in August, 1838, a diplomatic note, containing what reads very like a threat: 'France would have preferred to owe only to the spontaneous will and the friendly feeling of her faithful ally a measure which she owes it to herself to insist on, and which Switzerland surely will not delay.' The French ambassador at the same time communicated a letter from M. Molé, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, concluding thus: 'You will inform the Vorort that if, contrary to all expectations, Switzerland, making common cause with the individual who so gravely compromises her repose, refuses the removal of Louis Bonaparte, you are ordered to demand your passports.' This was plain speaking. It was telling Switzerland, 'Submit

with a good grace, or prepare for war.'

But Switzerland, having in a manner adopted Louis Napoléon by making him an honorary citizen of the Canton of Thurgau, and not choosing to abandon her own rights and dignities as a free and neutral State, would not submit with a good grace or a bad one. In spite of her comparative weakness, she refused to eat humble pie to Louis Philippe's government. Neither party would yield; war was imminent; the wolf was growing at the lamb's troubling the waters, when the subject of the quarrel, to avert the conflict, of his own accord retired to England, after addressing a spirited and right-minded letter to the President of the Council of the Canton Thurgau. All Louis Philippe gained by the business was to proclaim to the world that Napoléon's nephew really made him uneasy, however contemptuously the aspirant might be treated by the journals under government influence.

While in London, the Prince thought the time arrived to make another desperate trial of his fortunes. Some of his reasons are known, others not known, others surmised; whilst others suggested are really no reasons at all. For instance, supposing the English Secretary for Foreign Affairs had been publicly civil to the exiled Prince; that Lord Palmerston had called on him in secret; that the Russian Ambassador had given him encouragement, it is exceedingly improbable that those personages would recommend an armed attack on a friendly power. The remains of Napoléon I. had been transferred from St. Helena to the Invalides in Paris, reviving the memory of the Bonaparte family. By a curious coincidence, several regiments whom Louis Napoléon had known at Strasbourg were now garrisoned in towns on the north and western coasts of France. Moreover, he was in communication with a great number of high functionaries, generals, and political personages—who they were exactly is less easily known—who said to him, 'March; we are with you!'

He also might be egged on to the enterprise by enemies as well as by friends. Agents of the July Government might urge him to the attempt, in order to entrap a dangerous rival. Louis Philippe, they say, having complained to M. Thiers that he did not keep a sufficiently sharp eye on the Prince, Thiers replied that he had only to give a little more activity to the manoeuvres which caused uneasiness, to put a speedy end to their fears. More activity was given accordingly. Certain it is that Louis Philippe's government knew where the Prince was, and what he was doing, day by day and hour by hour.

In consequence of the resolution taken, a steamer, the *Edinburgh Castle*, was hired for a month, at the rate of 100*l.* per week, for a party of pleasure, to go wherever the Prince and his friends thought fit. What is singular is, that this devoted band—comprising M. de Persigny, General Montholon, Dr. Conneau, M. de Mésonan, and others—embarked without knowing the object of their voyage. They were told nothing, and they asked no questions. When they were all on board and fairly out at sea, the Prince assembled them on the deck and acquainted them with his resolution. To avoid suspicion, they had been picked up at different points of the passage. They were unanimous in their approval, and swore to follow him. Arms, ammunition, uniforms, a carriage and horses, and a tame eagle which the Prince was to set at liberty on touching the coast of France, had previously been put on board. This last excited some ridicule at the time, and even now can hardly be regarded as a serious item of the expedition.

This second morning call on France occurred on the 6th of August, 1840, at about four in the morning, on the beach of Wimereux, about a couple of miles north of Boulogne (by the coast; farther distant by the road). Lieutenant Aladenize was waiting there, with three men. The Prince had counted on three hundred, drawn up in battle array. The little troop, composed of twenty-seven persons, com-

menced their march, bearing a tricoloured flag surmounted with an eagle. Three or four customs-men, who ran up to see what was going on, were forced to follow them to the town. A post of soldiers of the 42nd, whom they passed on their way, were in vain pressed by Aladenize to join the *cortège*. They reached the barracks of the 42nd about five in the morning. The officers were still absent. Aladenize made the drums beat. The soldiers got up. He drew them up in two ranks, and presented the Prince, who made them a short and pithy speech. There were cries of 'Vive l'Empereur!' But a tumult arose at the barrack-gates. Three officers were hastening to join their soldiers.

'Captain!' shouted M. de Méonnan to Captain Col-Puygelier, who commanded the two companies of the 42nd, and who was not in the secret of what was to happen that day, 'be one of us, and your fortune is made.'

The captain, sabre in hand, tried to give the word of command, but his voice was drowned by cries of 'Vive le Prince Louis!'

'But where is he?' he asked, struggling to disengage himself from the persons who held him.

'Here,' said the Prince, stepping forward. 'I am Prince Louis. Join us, and you shall have whatever you wish.'

'Prince Louis or no,' interrupted the captain, 'I see in you nothing but a conspirator. Clear the barracks! Murder me!' he added, seeing firearms pointed at him. 'At least I have done my duty.'

Aladenize, rushing forward, threw his arms round the captain, crying, 'Don't fire! respect the captain. I am answerable for his life!'

'They are deceiving you. Vive le Roi! Vive Louis Philippe!' shouted the captain to the subalterns who hastened to release him from the grasp of his assailants. Then advancing towards the Prince, he again ordered him to quit the barracks.

In the struggle between the turners-out and those who would not be turned out, the Prince un-

intentionally pressed the trigger of a pistol which he carried for his personal defence. The ball struck a grenadier in the face, but the wound was not serious.

The soldiers of the 42nd, seeing one of their men fall, looked at each other in consternation and uncertainty what to do. While Captain Col-Puygelier profited by the moment to regain the ascendancy he had lost, the Prince gave his friends the order to go with him and take possession of the Upper Town.

Arrived there they found the gates shut, and were unable to force them open. His friends then urged him to retreat and re-embark on board the steamer, which still might easily have been accomplished. 'No, no!' he cried, 'I will not leave France again. Living or dead, I will remain on French soil.'

They then proceeded to the foot of the column, which was erected in honour of the Grand Army, once assembled on that spot for the invasion of England. One of his partisans, M. Lombard, entered the column for the purpose of planting a flag on the summit, but they were pursued by gendarmes, national guards, and troops of the line. The Prince wanted to receive their fire without returning it; which would have been certain death. His adherents carried him off by force and dragged him towards the beach. They threw themselves together into a bark that was lying on the shore, and, which, by great exertions, they got into the sea. The boat upset; and while they were struggling with the waves, their assailants fired at them from the top of the cliff. There were from fifteen hundred to two thousand men against fifteen or twenty defenceless persons. It was a cruel and a savage human battle, whose barbarity can be extenuated only by the hot blood and exaggerated passions of the moment. Two of Louis Napoléon's friends, the Comte Dunin (a Polish nobleman) and M. Faure, were killed by his side. Several others were seriously wounded. He himself was hit by three bullets, two of which merely tore his clothes; the third only

slightly wounded him in the arm, and did not prevent his swimming out in the direction of his steamer, the Edinburgh Castle. When the firing ceased, several boats put off to pick up the fugitives floundering in the sea. One of them rowed up to M. de Mésonan, whose strength was already beginning to fail him. He cried to the men, 'Save the Prince; you will save me afterwards.' They and others were easily fished out of the water, and immediately put safe under lock and key in the gloomy old château which crowns the Upper Town of Boulogne-sur-Mer. Thus ended what one would call as bad a morning's work as it was possible to do without actually losing one's life. The Prince never seemed to think so. When he visited Boulogne, after becoming Emperor, we saw him point out to the Empress the window of the room in which he had been confined in that dingy stronghold.

His stay there was brief. On leaving, seeing the other prisoners at their respective windows, 'Adieu, my friends,' he said; 'I protest against this removal.'

'Adieu, mon Prince,' they cried. M. de Persigny added, 'The shade of the Emperor will protect you.'

His protest was little heeded. The colonel of the Municipal Guard, who had charge of him, told him, on taking his seat beside him in the carriage, that if he made the least movement he would blow his brains out. He was conducted first to Ham, and thence to Paris, where he was lodged in the Conciergerie, *au secret*, that is, without being allowed to communicate with a creature. A good deal was made of his having been put into the same cell which had held Fieschi, the would-be assassin of Louis Philippe. But when it is remembered that the first and paramount quality of a prison is to be a place of safe keeping, we think that the minor merits of a dungeon are hardly worth disputing about. Whoever may or may not have inhabited it, a dungeon is always a dungeon still; and the most respectable of dungeons is not so

cheerful an abode as to make its tenure a matter of congratulation.

What was to be done with Young Troublesome this time? Sending him to travel for his health was evidently useless. They hesitated to bring him to trial before a jury, because a jury perhaps might take it into its head to acquit him; so he was brought before a higher tribunal, more complaisant to the powers that be, the Chamber of Peers, where he appeared on the 26th of September, 1840. Ever since his disaster, the government journals pursued the same course as they had after the Strasburg affair, pelting him with ridicule, in order to lower him in the eyes of the nation, and insisting on the insufficiency of his means, in order to incite him to self-justification by stating his probable resources and so betraying the persons from whom he expected aid. Louis Napoléon was far too wise and wary to fall into such a shallow trap as that.

We omit the speeches pro and con, high flown but uninteresting; for the trial had not the excitement of uncertainty as to its result. A single passage from the Prince's address will serve as a specimen: 'One last word, Messieurs: I represent before you a principle, a defeat, a cause. The principle is the sovereignty of the people; the cause, that of the Empire; the defeat, Waterloo! The principle, you have recognised it; the cause, you have served it; the defeat, you have wished to avenge it. No; there is no disaccord between you and me; and I will not believe that I can possibly be singled out to bear the penalty of others' apostacy.'

Of course Louis Napoléon was found guilty; but not choosing to apply the law and condemn the prisoner to death, the Court of Peers, using its discretionary powers, sentenced him to a punishment not provided in the code, namely, to imprisonment for life in a fortress situated on the continental territory of the kingdom. They did not want another Elba. The fortress selected for the purpose was Ham.

'Where did your Majesty con-

trive to acquire such varied information?" a courtly diplomatist inquired one day of Napoléon III.

'At the University of Ham,' was the frank reply.

In fact, it was at Ham especially that he rendered himself capable of filling the station which afterwards fell to his lot. The 'secret voice' told him that his captivity would not be endless. It lasted six years; which, however, were anything but lost time in the end. While increasing his store of knowledge by serious studies, he contrived to attract the favourable attention of the people of France. His correspondence invariably declared that he preferred a prison in his native country to freedom in a foreign land. Moreover, he was preoccupied by another thought which is strongly expressed in a letter to Lady Blesington. 'I do not desire to quit my present habitation; for here I am in my place. With the name I bear, I must have either the gloom of a dungeon or the sunshine of power.'

Louis Napoléon's prison is gloomy enough. The fortress of Ham, built of brick and stone, impresses you at first sight by its sombre aspect. It is a square flanked at each corner with heavy towers. The spacious windows, which once admitted the light of day, have been filled with brickwork, leaving only a few small openings which are half choked by iron bars, converting it into the semblance of a mausoleum for the dead rather than that of a dwelling-place for living men.

On entering the fortress, you observe to the left an aged elm, opposite to which, at the further end of an inner court, is a long damp building buried in the shade cast by the earth-aloopes of the grassy ramparts. To the right is a little door respectably furnished with bolts and bars. 'That's it,' says the guide to the curious visitor. You enter. The ground-floor, consists of four small rooms, two of which were General Montholon's lodgings; who, together with Dr. Conneau, was the Prince's companion in captivity. On the first

floor are two small rooms; one, barely ten feet square, was Louis Napoléon's bedroom; the other served him for drawing-room, library, and study. Two other rooms similar to the above were occupied by Dr. Conneau—a sort of dining-room, and a little cabinet in which the Prince made chemical experiments.

Louis Napoléon was allowed to walk, at certain hours, over a platform forty feet long by twenty wide, on the parapet of the eastern rampart, overlooking the canal. In these walks, however, he was attended by a keeper, who followed him as close as his shadow. He could, moreover, grow flowers in a little garden, which he carefully cultivated. At the foot of the Constable's Tower, he planted a honeysuckle, to hide the bars and gratings of his prison. Beneath the honeysuckle, in a sort of niche of foliage and flowers, he fixed a semi-circular bench, which was scrupulously preserved, and probably is so still. In this retreat the prisoner passed perhaps the six best years of his life. As some consolation, he breathed the air of France. And besides, thick as were his prison walls, they did not exclude all knowledge of what was passing outside them. Every day he received the journals and all the new books. He could take part in his country's intellectual proceedings, if not mingle in her active and everyday life. Considering all the circumstances, it can hardly be said that he was harshly treated. His historical and dramatic reading might remind him of times when an angry monarch would have said, 'Off with his head! So much for Napoléon (Louis)! Nay more, he might rejoice that Louis Philippe had not set his pretensions at rest in the way his uncle had disposed of the poor Duc d'Enghien's.

Much of his time was occupied by authorship, which was varied by the visits of democratic leaders. One day, in the course of a long conversation, Louis Blanc said to him, 'The popularity of your name would give a great support to the democratic party. In case of suc-

cess, you would become the head of the executive power, but subordinate to the committees, if the government were revolutionary, or subordinate to the National Assembly, if the government were normal.' But the Prince seeming little inclined to content himself with the task of signing measures in which he had no initiative, they parted without coming to any conclusion. That was not *his* line of business. His tendencies lay rather in an imperial direction. When the soldiers who guarded him saluted him in an undertone with 'Vive l'Empereur,' while he was taking his walk, 'You are always talking about the Republic,' he said to a friend who witnessed these secret manifestations; 'but even here you may see how France is longing for her Emperor.'

More than once, the soldiers offered to assist his escape. One day, General Changarnier arrived at the fortress of Ham. Without visiting the prisoner, he sent the whole garrison out of the fortress, leaving only a subaltern and thirty men to guard it. The subaltern, pretexting some reason for approaching the Prince's prison, whispered, 'We are only a handful of men, and our one and sole thought may be easily guessed. If the prisoner wishes to escape, we shall all be blind.' 'I thank the brave fellow who tells me that,' Louis Napoléon replied; 'but I do not wish anybody to run into danger on my account.'

At another time a regiment had bivouacked before the fortress gate. A stone fell at the Prince's feet, wrapped in a paper, on which was written, 'The regiment desires to be passed in review by you tomorrow morning.' And, in fact, on taking his usual walk next day, he saw the regiment filing off at a distance.

These demonstrations in Louis Napoléon's favour caused the authorities such uneasiness that, in the early days of his confinement, the garrison was several times changed without any warning. Afterwards it was determined to change it every fortnight, to pre-

vent the troops having the time to take too much interest in the captive's position.

The sixth year brought a cruel trial. One day a pressing letter reached Ham, informing him that his father, the ex-king of Holland, advanced in years and seriously ill, desired to see him once more before he died. The Prince wrote to M. Duchâtel, then Minister of the Interior, promising, on his honour, if the government allowed him to go to Florence, to return and place himself at their disposal immediately they expressed a wish that he should do so.

The Council of Ministers, after considering the request, declared themselves incompetent, and referred the Prince directly to the king himself. A letter was therefore addressed to Louis Philippe on the 14th of January, 1846, and warmly supported by M. Odillon-Barrot. The king at first seemed satisfied with the letter; he even said to Marshal Ney's son, who delivered it, that the guarantee offered by the Prince was sufficient. Subsequently he was advised to exact a formal application for pardon, and a promise on oath not to disturb the existing order of things in France. The Prince, feeling that his agreement to such conditions would degrade him in the eyes of the country, indignantly refused, exclaiming, 'Better, a thousand times, to die in prison than disgrace my character! My father will pardon me, fully understanding the motives which prevent my going to close his eyes.' The annoyance felt at the conduct of the government was expressed in a letter to a friend: 'Whenever I leave this place, it shall be either for the cemetery or the Tuileries.'

The ex-king of Holland getting worse and worse, only one course lay open, if practicable—flight. The Prince, once determined to make his escape, watched the first favourable opportunity of putting it in execution. An order having been given about this time to repair certain portions of the fortress of Ham, and notably a staircase, a great number of masons were em-

played on the works, under the direction of a guard of engineers. Louis Napoléon acquainted himself with their goings and comings, their ways and habits, and resolved to leave the prison in the disguise of a labourer. In this scheme he was admirably seconded by his valet de chambre, Charles Thélin, who had observed that the men were most strictly watched at the time of their coming to and leaving work; but he also observed that much less attention was paid to those who went out to fetch materials necessary for the reparations. He also noticed that, at a certain hour of the morning one of the two keepers left the fortress to fetch the letters and newspapers. On these data the plan of escape was concocted between Thélin, Doctor Comneau, and the Prince. General Montholon, being advanced in years and ill at the time, was not let into the secret.

On the 23rd of May Louis Napoléon was visited by some English gentlemen whom he had known in London. He begged them to lend him their passports, on the ground that his valet, who wanted to take a short journey, would find them useful in procuring post-horses. The travellers, whether suspecting any move or not, were happy to render the service, if trifling, still more happy if important. By this means in the evening of the 25th Thélin managed to engage for the next day a cabriolet in the village of Ham.

On the 25th the Prince rose early, cut off his moustaches and imperial, and put on the prepared disguise—a complete labourer's dress, consisting of blue linen blouse and trousers, a dilapidated cap, rough wooden shoes, and dirty apron. The costume was completed by blackened eyebrows, a rough black wig hanging about his ears, a painted face, and a short clay pipe. In spite of the risk of keeping about him papers which might betray his identity, he would not part with a couple of letters, one from his mother, the other from the Emperor. He might especially value the latter from its

containing the sentence: 'I hope that Louis Napoléon, as he grows up, will make himself worthy of the destinies which await him.'

At seven in the morning the masons entered the fortress to resume their work. Thélin offered them something to drink, and having got them together round the table in the vestibule, ran to tell his master that the moment was come. The Prince, shouldering a plank procured beforehand, walked down the stairs, avoiding the vestibule where the men were drinking. Thélin, dressed as for a journey, also stepped into the courtyard, leading his dog by a string, and walking a few paces before the Prince. As he had obtained permission, the previous evening, to go to Saint-Quentin, the keepers wished him a pleasant journey; at which he stopped to chat with them, to divert their attention from the Prince, who was gravely advancing with the plank on his shoulder, held in such a way as to screen his face. So impossible was it to guess who he was, that a labourer, taking him for one of his comrades, went up to him to speak to him; but Thélin, with great address, directed his attention to something else. A little further on he met an officer, who, luckily, was busy reading a letter. Then he had to pass through a group of thirty soldiers assembled in front of the guard-house. Finally, having passed through all the courts, he came to the outer lodge. The porter, fearing a blow from the plank, quickly drew back his head. A few paces beyond the last sentinel, who followed him with his eyes, the Prince dropped his pipe and picked it up again. The movement served to hide his face, already half concealed by the plank.

At last, crossing the two draw-bridges, he was free!

Thélin ran to fetch the cabriolet he had hired the day before. During his absence the fugitive waited with feverish impatience on the road to Saint-Quentin. Unconscious of the weight of his wooden shoes he soon reached the cemetery of Saint-Sulpice, nearly a mile out-

side of the village. He threw himself at the foot of the lofty crucifix which rises in the midst of the graves, and thanked Heaven for the happiness vouchsafed to him. He saw Thélín advancing with his cabriolet; but another carriage was following. He waited till the latter had passed it. Then, jumping into the cabriolet, he threw his wooden shoes into a field, and took the reins, now playing the part of driver. A few minutes afterwards two mounted gendarmes rode out of Saint-Sulpice. But they took another direction; namely, towards Péronne.

Before entering Saint-Quentin, which is a busy manufacturing town, Louis Napoléon got out of the cabriolet and walked through the streets till he left the town by the road to Cambrai, where Thélín was to pick him up with another vehicle.

He waited, and waited; no Thélín came. He sat down by the roadside, leaning his head on his hands, and asking himself whether he was again to be made the victim of a third disappointment. He felt something gently jogging his shoulder. It was the dog that Thélín had led out tied with a string, running before the carriage, and come to caress him. In a few minutes they were sitting behind a good pair of post-horses on the road to Valenciennes, where, at four o'clock in the afternoon, they took the train from Paris which stops there on its way to Brussels.

While the Prince was thus hastening towards Brussels, Dr. Conneau, who remained in the fortress, employed every possible stratagem to give him the time to cross the frontier. He placed a puppet or effigy in the Prince's bed, to make believe he was taken ill; closed the door of the bedroom which opened into the passage; lighted a fire in the sitting-room, and kept a supply of coffee hot before it. When the man who waited on them arrived, 'We will breakfast in my room,' said the doctor. 'The little table will suffice, because General Montholon is indisposed.'

That morning the curé was expected to celebrate mass. The doctor sent him a letter, which the Prince had written overnight, begging him to defer saying mass till another day. He then paid a short visit to General Montholon, who was still in bed. At nine o'clock the commandant of the fortress sent to make inquiries about the Prince. He replied that the Prince was indisposed.

The trick which the doctor played, to confirm this bulletin, was particularly ingenious, if it was not a plagiarism from Vaucanson's duck. That artist, amongst other mechanical marvels, produced an automaton duck, which not only ate and swallowed, but *digested* its food—that is, it ejected, in due time after eating, the apparent results of digestion; which really were an artful mixture of spinach, chalk, and other ingredients. Now, the cunning doctor, a little after ten in the morning, displayed a composition of coffee, milk, boiled bread, nitric acid, and eau de Cologne, in proof of the Prince's *vomissements*. At one o'clock, the commandant, remembering the efficiency of the master's eye, came himself to see how things were going on. The doctor told him the Prince was very fatigued, and required repose. At seven in the evening the commandant returned, declaring that as the Prince had been ill all day he was obliged to make his report of it: with which intent he entered the bedroom.

'The Prince is asleep,' said the doctor. 'Make as little noise as possible.'

'It is strange,' observed the commandant, 'that he was not awakened by the rolling of the drums just now.' So saying, he stepped up to the bed, and laid his hand on a bundle on the pillow, which was a capital imitation of a sick man's head bound round with a silk pocket-handkerchief.

The doctor was arrested immediately. But what was that to him? The bird was fairly flown, and safely housed in Brussels. It would have been no use setting the telegraph to work, even had a tele-

graph in those days connected Ham with the lines of railway. 'He's o'er the border, and awa', not with Jock o' Hazeldean, but with Charles Thélin and his favourite retriever. Being pretty well assured of that, what did the good doctor care about being marched off to Péronne, in handcuffs like a common felon, between a couple of gendarmes? For a prisoner to escape, when no violence to his keepers has been committed, has always been held a venial offence; for a fellow-prisoner to aid that escape is held to be still more pardonable.

For this offence he was tried at Péronne on the 15th of July, 1846. He neither extenuated nor vaunted the act of which he was accused. He simply said that what he had done was in obedience to the dictates of his heart, his attachment, and his gratitude. In spite of the eloquence of his counsel, Maître Nogent-Saint-Laurent, one of the most brilliant advocates of the court of Paris, who said very fine things very little to the purpose, he was condemned to three months' imprisonment, a sentence which, under the circumstances, may be looked upon as another form of 'severely reprimanded;' because when a man has undergone a five years' imprisonment, and remains in prison after its expiration for the sake of attending a prisoner for life, it is laughable, contemptible, to give that man 'three months' for helping the perpetual prisoner to regain his liberty. Charles Thélin, never a prisoner himself, but merely a prisoner's valet de chambre, was condemned *par contumace*, in his absence, because he did not present himself to take his trial, to six months of durance vile. Whether six months or sixty would be all the same to him when once beyond the gripe of the French gendarmes. We may here add that when Louis Napoléon became Prince President, Dr. Conneau was still his physician and friend.

As soon as he reached England, Louis Napoléon wrote the following letter to M. de Sainte-Aulaire, then French ambassador at London.

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'MONSIEUR LE COMTE,—I write to declare frankly to the man who has been my mother's friend that in escaping from prison I had not the slightest intention of renewing against the French government the attempts which have already proved so disastrous. My only object was to go and see my aged father.

'Before taking this determination I have exhausted every means of solicitation to obtain permission to proceed to Florence, and I have offered every guarantee compatible with my honour; but my overtures having been repulsed I have done what, under similar circumstances, in the reign of Henri IV., the Ducs de Guise and de Nemours did.

'I beg you to acquaint the French government with my pacific intentions, and I hope that this completely spontaneous declaration on my part will hasten the deliverance of the friends whom I have left in prison.

'L. N. BONAPARTE.

'London, 28th May, 1846.'

It is possible that in this, his formal renunciation of any armed contest, Louis Napoléon was partly influenced by a presentiment of the approaching downfall of the Orleans dynasty, and by expectations, in that event, of being called upon to present himself by France.

He failed, however, in his object of bidding his father a last farewell. The Tuscan minister in London refused to grant him passports, and the Grand Duke himself, when pressed to allow the Prince to enter Italy, replied that *French influence* did not permit him to tolerate the Prince's stay in Florence even for four-and-twenty hours. The ex-king of Holland expired shortly after without the satisfaction of having seen his son. But Louis Philippe, while acting thus harshly, must surely have had hard work in remembering to forget certain family obligations. His mother, in her need, had not vainly applied to the generosity of Louis Napoléon's mother, Queen Hortense, who had obtained from the Emperor, for the Dowager Duchess of Orleans, a pension of 400,000 francs, or 16,000*l*.

With his escape from Ham the Early Days of Napoléon III. are closed, and another course of action is entered on. Of the two leading events which we have had to relate—the attempts at Strasburg and Boulogne—we are impelled to ask, Could they by any possibility have succeeded? Of the first it has been said that the local success was not doubtful, if the movement had not been strangled in its birth by being penned up in a narrow barrack-yard; but even with the whole of Strasburg to back it, the Bonapartist cause was far from its triumph. Under a constitutional government, like that then existing in France, the army has not sufficient preponderance to effect, by itself alone, a revolution so complete as that projected by the imperial pretender. The peace and prosperity then enjoyed by the country made the middle classes averse to any violent change. The people, who had little to complain of, were indifferent to dynastic struggles. Both the Chambers were warmly attached to Louis Philippe, and, with such support, there is no doubt that the constitutional monarchy would have found an army to defend it. It is hardly probable, even had Louis Napoléon been for an instant triumphant at Strasburg, that his standard would have flown, like wild-fire, to Paris, as happened at his uncle's memorable return from Elba.

Add to the above considerations that an established government, whatever its form or its ostensible chief, is always slow to fall, through the mere *vis inertiae* of people's minds and the hesitation with which a nation accepts a change. Before there is a possibility of upsetting it it must have committed many grave faults. History proclaims that it is always morally dead before the hour of its actual dissolution. On the 30th of October, 1836, that fatal hour had not yet struck for the July dynasty, but its hold on the national confidence and esteem was greatly weakened, if not completely broken. The damaging discovery had been made that Louis Philippe thought more of his family interests than he did of the interests of

France; and if, at that time even, the people could have quietly decided, by vote, whom they would prefer as their chief, Louis Philippe or Louis Napoléon, there is little doubt that the choice would have fallen upon the latter.

Louis Napoléon's own opinion was that he might have succeeded. 'I shall be asked,' he wrote to his mother on board the ship which was carrying him to America, 'what impelled me to relinquish a happy existence, to run the risks of a hazardous enterprise. I answer that a secret voice dragged me on, and that for no inducement in the world would I have delayed an attempt which presented so many chances of success.

'And what gives me the most pain to think of is that now that my suppositions are replaced by the reality, and that I have seen what is instead of imagining what might be, I am able to form a judgment. *I retain the belief, more convinced than ever that, if I had been able to follow out my original plan, instead of now being under the equator, I should be in France.* What matter to me the cries of the vulgar who call me a madman because I have failed, and who would have exaggerated my merits had I triumphed? I take upon myself the whole responsibility of the issue, because I have acted from conviction and not through passion.'

The Boulogne affair seems still more desperate—at least to all who were not behind the scenes at the time. What has astonished everybody, and the result on which no uninspired mortal could at that time calculate, is the final event of the Second Empire. In fact, the circumstances under which a political game is played do more for its success than the most intelligent efforts, the cleverest combinations. It is impossible not to admit that, but for the faults committed by Louis Philippe's government, Louis Napoléon might now be living as a private individual, eating his own heart through disappointed hope and frustrated ambition. Here is a man who, twice running, at four years' interval, conspired against an

established government; who twice engaged in an impossible struggle, and each time failed through the powerlessness of his own proper cause. He is exiled, condemned, imprisoned, systematically made the butt of ridicule. For fifteen years—when not forgotten—he is looked upon as an enthusiast rather than as a hero; and then, when comes the tide in the affairs of men, six millions of votes bear him on to fortune!

Illogical and absurd, but true! Two grand mistakes, Strasburg and Boulogne, produced the election of the 10th of December. Had Louis Napoléon not shown himself, at all risks, as a pretender to the Empire, he would not have been President of the French Republic. Other members of the imperial family, namely, the sons of Lucien and Jerome Bonaparte, were not slow in appearing on the republican stage; but they attracted a very moderate degree of attention. They mounted guard as simple and patriotic volunteers at the gates of the provisional government. They were elected by Corsica, and took their seats without recalling any souvenirs or raising any expectations. They had done neither Strasburg nor Boulogne.

The Boulogne affair was more severely judged by the Prince himself. When President of the Republic he visited the fortress of Ham. To a toast proposed by the mayor he replied, 'I am deeply touched by the kind reception accorded to me by your fellow-citizens; but believe me, if I have come to Ham, it is not out of pride but gratitude. I had it at heart to thank the inhabitants, both of the town and its environs, for the marks

of sympathy which they ceaselessly bestowed during my misfortunes. Now that, elected by France, I am become the legitimate head of a great nation, it would be out of place to boast of a captivity caused by an attack on a regular government. When one has seen how many evils follow in the train even of the most justifiable revolutions, it is hard to understand how a man can have the courage to take upon himself the terrible responsibility of a change. I therefore make no complaint at having expiated here, by a six years' imprisonment, my rash infraction of the laws of my country; and I am happy, on the very spot where I have suffered, to propose a toast to the men who, in spite of their convictions, are determined to respect the institutions of their native land.'

Finally, we will quote a short passage from M. de Beaumont-Vassy's '*Histoire de mon Temps*.' 'There are destinies from which neither dynasties, nor peoples, nor individuals, can escape. The destiny of the Bonaparte family is to dethrone nothing but anarchy—a grand destiny if ever there was one. Napoléon I., the successful general—supposing he had wished it, and certainly he would not have wished it—could never have upset the feeble Louis XVI. His strength would have spent itself against that weakness. But he *had* to set his foot upon the hideous and formidable revolutionary dragon. It was not allotted to Napoléon III. to dethrone Louis Philippe, of whom he was to be the successor. To every man his providential task in the world, to every dynasty its appointed work!'

E. S. D.



THE BRITISH SETTLEMENT AT BOULOGNE.

IT would be a sad blow to the British were Boulogne taken by the French. The love of Calais to Queen Mary was merely engraven on her heart. The loss of Boulogne would be a wound inflicted upon our national habits—a serious personal inconvenience to many thousands of our countrymen, who, for purposes permanent or temporary, as the case may be, make the place their home. Half English it has been for many years: it is now three-quarters at least, as far as the money-spending portion of its inhabitants are concerned. There have been some symptoms during the last year or two of aggression on the part of the Gauls; and at one time the French visitors are said to have out-numbered the English. Such an unnatural state of things will occur now and then when tourists from inland grow tired of other parts of the coast; but the British element in Boulogne is too strong to be easily eradicated, and the Boulogne people themselves would be the last to desire the departure of the friendly invaders. For our army of occupation is an army that brings plenty, and an assurance of peace; the people recognise us as *nos amis les ennemis*, and desire no better allies.

The character of the town is proclaimed at the first glance. Englishman as you are, you have no sooner landed than you find yourself at home. The women who come on board for your baggage are decidedly not English, and there is nothing to remind you of your native land in the Douane officials—who do their spitting, by-the-way, very gently in these days, when Custom Houses are becoming things of the past. But the people assembled to see you debark are all British to a fault—to a whisker and a chignon at any rate—and the spirit of jocularly in which the appearance of the passenger is discussed breathes of your island home. The criticism, by-the-way, is peculiarly jocular if the passage

has been rough; but in any case it is sufficiently keen; for people already located always claim an advantage over newcomers—a characteristic which you may observe in a modified degree any day in a steamer or a railway carriage. I believe, indeed, that prisoners in a jail look upon new arrivals as interlopers, and resent their intrusion for the first few days.

The town, as you see it piled up from the port, is unmistakably continental; and the hotels and other houses that line the shore are too uniformly white, and have too many green jealousies to be taken for English. But look at the inscriptions upon the walls and the announcements in the shop windows: the French language is nowhere except upon sufferance, with an English translation appended. British habits too—assumed for you, of course—are consulted on all sides. Pale ale is evidently supposed to be the first necessity of the visitor, who is greeted on all sides with invitations from Bass, Allsopp, and Ind and Coope. Brandy, too, greets him in equal profusion, with the assurance that it may be had for next to nothing per bottle, and some still less appreciable sum per glass; while there are not wanting intimations in which Mr. Kinahan is concerned, and playful pictures of tom cats on labels and show-boards, proclaiming the supply of a humbler but not less loved liquid.

The town teems with hotels. Go to almost any of them, and you will seek in vain for any need to air your French. Though the waiters be native in some instances, they all affect the language of the foreigner more or less; and none among them are more determined to talk to you in English than those who are least able. In the shops it is the same. There are some severely national people who talk French, and carry out the farce even to the extent of not knowing English; but the majority make a point of meeting the stranger upon his own colloquial

ground. You do not see many announcements of 'English spoken;' the fact is taken for granted. And to make sure that the English shall lose nothing by ignorance of French, the inscriptions in the shops and elsewhere, when couched in that language, are invariably accompanied by a translation. The wants of our countrymen, too, are carefully considered in the nature of the prevalent trades; and it would be difficult to think of any article of current requirement which cannot be obtained in the Grand Rue, the Rue Napoléon, or the Rue Neuve Chaussée. The retail commerce of the town must have greatly increased of late, to judge by the number of new shops—some of which are of Parisian pretensions, and give themselves metropolitan airs generally.

Next to pale ale and cognac, it appears to be the prevailing impression that the English visitors are most immediately in want of *bijouterie*; for the supply of which there are new establishments on a large scale—the prices being so minute as to put even the Palais Royal to the blush. They present, in fact, the pleasing combination described by French schoolgirls as '*magnifique et pas chère*.' What becomes of them after they are bought is a mystery; for nobody is ever seen wearing them in England. I once asked the question of a local jeweller, who told me that the better class of persons bought only the better class of articles for their own use: those of an inferior kind were purchased for presents. He seemed to consider the destination of the latter articles to fully account for their disappearance.

The people for whom all these pretty things are mainly intended—of course I mean the English—belong to two different classes, the residents and the visitors. The residents, according to popular belief, are divisible into two classes—residents from choice and residents from necessity. The residents from choice have very little to do with the place, and affect to have still less. They have certainly no influence upon its outward charac-

teristics. They live for the most part in the Haute Ville, beyond the ramparts, which may be considered the Faubourg St. Germain of Boulogne, not only as regards the English, but the French inhabitants. The latter are not unaffable in intercourse. But from their eminence the English are believed to look down with superb scorn upon the other classes of their countrymen, seldom appearing in the most frequented places, and leading a life of intense respectability—just a trifle dull, I fancy—among themselves. Some of their number, it may be, belong to the involuntary class; but as they do not make the avowal, there is no ostensible ground for including them in the category. Indeed very few people among the British settlers are so frank as to inform you of such a fact, and it is only by inference that you are led to assume it. There are certainly a great many inhabitants of Boulogne who are supposed to stay there for the benefit of their pecuniary health, and some among them doubtless do. But the number is very small compared with what it was, owing, I believe, to a certain change in the British law of debtor and creditor enacted a few years since. An old resident told me the other day that the society of the place—he meant the English society, of course—had been quite broken up by the new Bankruptcy Act, which allowed the leaders to go home. 'Boulogne,' he added, plaintively, 'has seen its best days, and will never be again what it was.' I am inclined, indeed, to think that the residents from necessity are but few and far between, and that the old reputation of the place is but little deserved. Time was when it was taken for granted that nine persons out of ten whom you met on the pier had sought the protection of a foreign flag for strictly personal reasons, and had come to 'settle' in anything but a pecuniary sense of the word. Then it was that the majority of the men whom you met reminded you irresistibly of Tennyson's line about—

'Shady coves upon some sunny shore,'

and nobody doubted the appro-

priateness of another writer's address to the place, beginning—

'Beautiful Boulogne! I laud thee in song;
'Home of the stranger who's done something
wrong.'

But times have changed. You no longer see the wistful glances which used to follow the departing boat, nor hear the continual assurances which you used to receive from lingering visitors that they were going to England immediately. Still it must be confessed that there are a great number of persons haunting Boulogne for mysterious reasons; and though they are all probably *sans peur* and *sans reproche*, it is just possible that some among them are at least influenced by the inexpensiveness of the place as a domestic residence. In this respect Boulogne is scarcely comparable to Malta, where it is proverbial that you may dine off fish, flesh, and fowl for sixpence; nor to the Channel Islands, where it is also proverbial that you may have a glass of liquor at a café and get twelvence change out of your shilling—a happy arrangement explained by the fact that the local shilling is worth a baker's dozen of pennies. But Boulogne, though not so cheap as it was, has still considerable attractions in this way compared with another land upon which I do not wish to make personal reflections. The fact is, of course, not quite apparent to casual visitors who go to the hotels, though some of these establishments are all that the most stingy person could desire, and there are only two or three where they charge anything like Paris prices. Those most affected by families take you in by contract, and are very mild in the matter of 'extras.' People who would not look upon one another in England, without special introductions, there live together for weeks or months, as the case may be, in very considerable harmony; and in one hotel at least the affability, which is the prevailing characteristic of the local manners, is carried to such an extent, that the visitors have balls and private theatricals together upon the most intimate terms. The place to which

I allude is a curiosity in its way. A few years ago there were a couple of arcades dividing two principal streets. They were chiefly occupied by cheap shops, so cheap as to be equally unprofitable to purchasers and proprietors. They did not pay, in fact, and were gradually absorbed by an hotel keeper, who turned the shops into bed-rooms, and the thoroughfares into coffee-rooms—a rather hazardous arrangement, as it seemed at first, but one which has resulted in perfect success. The public department is extremely public, but the visitors take to it with charming confidence, and may be met after dinner—ladies as well as gentlemen—enjoying their tea and coffee in a scene which conveys the impression to a passing stranger of a combination of the Burlington Arcade and the Garden of Boccaccio. Such unreserved habits can be met with only on the Continent, of course; but it happens that the people here are nearly all English; and my impression of my countrymen abroad is, that they take to strange ways of living rather more readily than any other nation. When they once set about accommodating themselves to foreign customs, the amount of accommodation they will undergo is wonderful. I remember, for instance, a lady—not perhaps a profoundly wise person even in her native land—being seen by a friend who had sought the shelter of a shop, marching up the Rue Napoléon, in a state of perfect composure, under a pelting shower of rain. 'What are you doing, my dear Mrs. —?' he asked, as she was passing him; 'you are getting wet through; why not come in here?' Her response was a glance of reproof, mingled with pity, as she said, with a cosmopolitan air, 'We must do in France as the French do.' The principle is an excellent one; but in other ways, besides the one in question, may be carried to the extent of doing in France as the French don't.

To one particular institution of the French, the English in Boulogne are accommodating themselves to any extent. We have nothing like the *Etablissement des Bains*

de Mer in England, except a very mild approach to it in the shape of the 'libraries' of some of our old-fashioned watering places. But you would suppose, from the manner in which our compatriots make use of the Etablissement, that it was a necessity to our national habits. The Etablissement at Boulogne, though on a larger and generally superior scale, is very much like the Etablissement at Dieppe, Trouville, or elsewhere on the French coast. It resembles in most respects the German kursaals, except that there is no *trente et quarante*, nor public play of any kind—that is to say general play presided over by the direction. The ostensible object of the Etablissement is of course bathing; but this is by no means its final cause. The greater number of the bathing-machines upon the beach belong to the institution, and you get your tickets and your towels in a bureau attached to the building, which has otherwise nothing to do with your *al fresco* ablutions—these being a matter entirely between yourself and the British Channel. For the rest, the Etablissement provides swimming, and what may be called 'fancy' baths in outlying parts of the premises, where ladies and gentlemen are equally welcome.

The main part of the structure has a great deal more to do with balls than bathing. The hall in the centre is devoted to dancing and music, and the man who could deny its admirable adaptability to both purposes would be unworthy the name of Briton. There are not many public rooms in London that can match it for size, while for sight and for sound it could scarcely be surpassed anywhere. The former recommendation, I should explain, consists in the view enjoyed from the enclosed galleries above of the open scene below. But there is a still better recommendation in the floor, which people who can dance upon it say is polished to perfection. There are people who can't dance upon it, and they declare that it is slippery to a fault; but a little custom, I believe, reconciles most persons to the arrangement, which,

by-the-way, is far from unknown to dancing places in England, though we used to *chalk* our floors instead of polishing them not many years ago.

The remainder of the building is given up to the usual purposes of a club, with some additions, caused by the fact that the members are not confined to one sex, and that nothing like severe business in the way of recreation can well be entertained. There are billiard rooms where ladies may play if they please, and apartments where other games are transacted in common. Of these the *Top Hollandais* is an especial favourite, owing, doubtless, to its simple character, which brings it within the range of the meanest capacity; the principal requirement of the player being what is described in the language of Ireland as 'more power to the elbow.' The whist room alone is reserved for the exclusive occupation of the male kind. It was not always so. A few years ago ladies formed perhaps the majority of its frequenters. But their presence became somehow not generally acceptable. Susceptible men found them a dangerous distraction and unsusceptible men found them an intolerable bore. On the one side it was apparent that hearts were trumps to an inconvenient extent; that a man was as likely as not to trump his partner's queen when the queen of his affections was looking over his shoulder; and that instead of playing the knave he frequently found himself playing the fool. On the other side it was contended that the ladies always won, or, when they lost, never paid their losses, which was almost as bad; and some, it was even insinuated, resorted to practices not permitted by Hoyle, and for which Major A—— would inevitably be cashiered. So the ladies were banished at last from the Paradise of Play, and allowed only the privilege of *Peris* at the Gate—afforded by a certain window from which a view of the apartment can be obtained. They are a loss in one respect, no doubt, but the games get on all the better for their absence.

In another department of the place,

too, the ladies are not very popular. I mean the reading room. There are newspapers and magazines enough in this apartment for the reading of a small army; but no mere man was ever known to get the publication he wanted, and when he wanted it. Perhaps it is unreasonable to expect the fulfilment of both these conditions when general accommodation has to be considered. But some persons are exacting to this extent, and make bitter complaints of the fair *abonnées*. Enter the room, for instance, any time between three o'clock and dinner time, when the London journals of the day are fresh and in demand;—you are certain to see a dozen men fuming about like the animals at the Zoological Gardens during the *mauvais quart d'heure* before feeding-time. Prominent among these, say, is Grampus, whom you are accustomed to meet at your club at about the same hour, grumbling, to be sure, but not for want of his literary refreshment. 'Look here,' he says, fiercely, when you ask him what's the matter; 'I have been waiting just three quarters of an hour by my watch to catch a sight of one of the London papers, and those two women have got them all, sir.' The two persons whom he calls by the opprobrious name of women are a couple of fair young things of some thirty summers, with legs and wings and pieces of the breast of birds in their hats, who are placidly perusing their broad sheets in apparent unconsciousness of causing anybody inconvenience. They are evidently going through their papers upon system. They have read the births, marriages, and deaths, to begin with. They have glanced at the leading articles and the telegrams. They have conned every word of their favourite Paris letter whose author goes everywhere, knows everybody, and enjoys with such happy carelessness the confidence of ambassadors and crowned heads. They have had a look at the sporting news, thoroughly mastered the minor paragraphs, and are now deep in the advertisements—not only the announcements relating to novelties, but those having reference to such stereotyped matters

as macassar oil and Mr. Bland's dancing lessons, with the Misses Bland officiating as partners. They clearly intend to read until the first dinner-bell has sounded at their hotels. 'But,' you suggest to Grampus, 'these ladies are monopolising only two of the papers; surely the others are about the room.' The suggestion drives him into depths of indignation. I suppress his expletives, but his rejoinder winds up with, 'Yes, they are *reading* only two of the papers, but I tell you, sir, they are *sitting* upon the others!' So there is really some ground for Grampus's ill temper, and you are not disinclined to agree with his subsequent reflection, that persons whom he calls women are not clubbably constituted. 'By Jove, sir,' he adds, 'when they have got votes, they'll want to come in among us in Pall Mall, and when they do I know where the blackballing will be.' It must be said, however, for the majority of the interesting sex, that they usually content themselves with the 'Vie Parisienne,' of miscellaneous dates, and odd volumes of the 'Petit Journal Pour Rire'—with which improving publications they pass many blameless hours during the day on the adjacent terrace overlooking the sea and the bathing-machines. This is a pleasant place at all times, and the pride and glory of the Etablissement. Here you meet ladies who are a great deal too lovely to read, however they may be the cause of reading in others; for I suspect they originate a great deal of the lighter fiction of the day by furnishing subjects for observing writers. Many, when they appear upon the terrace, have just come out of the sea, and when the sun has dried their hair and brightened their complexions, they look rather bewildering than otherwise. If you listen to gossiping people—that is to say to nearly everybody you meet—you will hear an entire little history connected with each. How their birth, parentage, education, and fortunes become known as they do is a wonder to weak people like myself; but I can only suppose that sea air assists the imagination. One young lady this season, whose only

obvious offences were a fair face, flowing hair, and a candid engaging manner, I found, according to a prevalent report, to have run away from her husband and small family, and, according to another prevalent report, to have no husband at all, having disposed of that incumbrance by a long course of ill-treatment, in which a course of strychnine, it was whispered, had some share. Which of these stories was most true it would be difficult to say; for their subject, to the certain knowledge of her friends, never had a husband to run away from or to kill, could pass a competitive examination in respectability, and is simply engaged to the gentleman whose attentions to her were a cause of scandal. This is sad, and I am sorry for Boulogne that it should be so. But there are people about the place who, of course, justify speculative reflections. I do not here allude to men, who are usually easy enough to make out. When they happen to be damaged there is seldom much mystery concerning them. Their names alone are sufficient to recall the circumstances of some court-martial, or civil proceedings in which they may have come to grief. But the antecedents of the ladies are more doubtful; and when they travel about, alone or in pairs, and show signs of being extremely marriageable, they are of course talked about and not always kindly treated by the popular tongue. However, they seem to have a pleasant time of it, and are a decided acquisition to the livelier society of the place. For my part, I do not think there is more harm in these than is contained in the fact that they are most frequently widows, living upon pensions, and they would doubtless marry more frequently than they do but for the hard condition imposed by an ungrateful country, that pensions—service pensions, at any rate—invariably cease when the recipient changes her name. Boulogne has a speciality for widows, and always had, and their number is further increased by those of the 'grass' description, who come principally from India. It is the combination of the two elements which

gives the peculiar tone to the out-of-door society of the place; for extremely marriageable young girls are of course to be met everywhere. And if the widows—of both classes—go about rather miscellaneously, they have at any rate the same excuse as that advanced by a late learned judge, who, when condoled with for having to take his turn at staying in London during the Long Vacation, replied, 'Well, it doesn't matter to me—a man must be somewhere.' Sir Nicholas Tindal, who was, I think, the author of 'this philosophical remark, was contented, because he lived in his profession, and all places were much the same to him; but his dictum applies to a great many men and women about Europe, upon different grounds.

It is at night that the Etablissement is in its glory; for every evening, in addition to the whist, and the billiards, and all the other games, including the eternal *Top Hollandaise*, there is a ball. There has been a concert during the afternoon, when everybody has met, and when the time for the ball comes everybody meets again. This is a trifle monotonous, perhaps, but most of the people are differently dressed, which is some kind of relief. Dressing, by-the-way, is *de rigueur* only on Fridays, upon the occasion of the great ball of the week; but many of the visitors, who are pressing, as they say in legal proceedings, for immediate execution, and cannot afford to make an effect only once in seven days, kindly consent to come in full toilette every night—to the advantage of the entertainment, as may be supposed. On Wednesdays the great ball is relieved by what may be literally described as a little one. It is juvenile—up to ten o'clock at least, when the children are sent home, and the rest of the society, who have arrived at the more interesting period of life when they are old enough to know better, take possession of the floor for the next couple of hours. The young ball is one of the prettiest things you ever saw, exaggerating as it does to any extent the characteristics of juvenile parties in private life. The light fantastic Lilliputians are

of course dressed within half an inch of their lives, and they do their little flirting with an ardour which is derived doubtless from a sense of escape from domestic restraint, and the feeling that they are on a *tapis franc* where they may disport themselves to their hearts' content, or their hearts' discontent as the case may be. I suggest the alternative because the goings on of these young people are simply awful, and calculated to put a great many grown-up drawing-rooms to the blush. And here I make no reference to the infantine excesses in the way of romping or other unruliness. The most flagrant disorder which ever scandalized governesses or infuriated nurses would be a blessed relief from the horrible propriety of the proceedings. Every small girl is a little lady; every small boy is a little gentleman. They are men and women in miniature; they assume grown-up airs and graces; their affectation is of the most matured kind; they not only flirt but they coquette; and they do both with the coldness and calculation of the most hardened people of the world. They not only get jealous—all children get that—but they play out their jealousy, inflict mental blows and stabs upon one another in remorseless spirit, and don't seem to mind either, in the most approved manner of society. The little wretches, too, affect languid airs, and to be taught by bitter experience that the sort of thing is a bore. A young monster in knickerbockers will tell his partner that the thing is getting slow and he shall go home. A young minx (I believe 'minx' is considered a term of reproach among ladies) in the most limited of skirts and the most profuse of legs, will assure her neighbour that the parties have fallen off and she doesn't think she shall come to them again. One says that the music is bad—which it certainly is not—and another that there are too many polkas on the card—which is an unfounded charge also, at any rate as far as the French taste is concerned, and even in England the long-neglected dance is undergoing a process of revival. But I need not follow the failings of

these little people. What our grandmothers and great-grandmothers—who are always held up as models of decorum and domestic virtues—would say of them I am afraid to think. I think they would do something more than echo the opinion of a British matron, expressed in my hearing the other night, that these precocious votaries of fashion ought to be all whipped and sent to bed. But the proceeding would seem nothing less than scandalous in the case of such boys and such girls—you would as soon think of whipping Sir Charles Grandison or an Austrian archduchess. And these boys and these girls are, as far as the majority are concerned, not French but English to the backbone. The French, to be sure, have a great deal to do in showing them the way they should go. There is a little weekly publication called '*La Saison*,'—an 'organ' of the *Etablissement*—which contained a 'leading article,' the other day, pointing out the advantages of having your children taught dancing by a professor attached to the place. In addition to the improvement in deportment derived from his lessons, the writer assures us that the young gentlemen and ladies gain greatly in confidence, and in all those little arts of society which can be learned only in drawing-rooms. Among these he especially mentions the art of saying agreeable nothings in a great many words—scattering, in fact, the small change of society without any necessity for having a balance at your banker's. He teaches all these things, it seems, and a great deal more; and no spectator of the juvenile balls can doubt that he has wonderfully apt pupils.

The bathing at Boulogne is not considered so good as at some places on the English coast, and is not without danger at certain times of the tide; but there is a Humane Society which provides surveillants, some of whom attend in boats to warn the bathers when they are not in safety. You are invited, too, by the printed announcements in the machines, to consult these officials before going into the water as to

the most eligible places, but I never heard of any persons taking this precaution. The society's men, however, are very assiduous in calling to you when they think you are going out too far, and I suppose they would take equal trouble to rescue you when you happened to be drowning; but the latter supposition is doubted by persons claiming particular experience; and there was an occasion of a wreck not long since, when these officials were said to have consulted their own safety to an extent inappropriate to their calling. The English translation, by the way, of the society's announcement already referred to is rather whimsically expressed. The *surveillants*, we are told, are forbidden to receive any 'gratification' from the bathers, which is hard upon them considering the humorous antics they are obliged to witness. The coachmen who drive you into the sea are also prohibited from receiving any 'retribution' for their pains; and as the said coachmen keep you waiting an unconscionably long time, and after depositing you high and dry assail you with startling thumps upon the side of the machine to enforce their inevitable appeal for '*bakhsheesh*,' this rule seems rather hard upon the bathers. For the rest it may be mentioned that the ingenious translator talks about the danger being greatest when the sea is '*ruff*.' The bathing, it may be here observed, is conducted with that combined attention to decorum and ornament which is observed at all French watering-places. A very slight garment is required on the part of gentlemen bathing alone; those who bathe with ladies must wear a little more; and the ladies themselves affect such pretty costumes as a general rule that they need not—and to all appearances don't—mind who sees them. The local ideas upon the latter point were illustrated the other morning by one of the machine men, who told me that it was very early to go into the sea then, it being only half-past seven o'clock. I had better, he added, wait until one, when there would be *beaucoup du monde*.

There is very little organized amusement in Boulogne beyond the

Etablissement; and as this belongs to the municipality, the latter, I suppose, is not very anxious to encourage rival attractions. Otherwise there would surely be *cafés chantants*, and other recreations of the kind, which experience proves to be as congenial to the English as to the French. The theatre, however, is an institution which our neighbours are not likely to dispense with. Of course there is one in Boulogne. It is of varying fortunes, but generally achieves a moderate success. For the last couple of years or more it has been devoted to opera—of a light and *Offenbachy* character, suited to the calibre of the company, which is not quite equal to efforts on a grand scale. Last year it presented us with the '*Grande Duchesse*,' among other attractions, very satisfactorily rendered; this year we have had the '*Domino Noir*,' and other pieces of the same class, with an attempt at Gounod's '*Faust*.' Our countrymen do not take to the class of performance quite so readily as they would to the general drama; and they are not quite so much in the majority here as they are at most public places in Boulogne. The management look to the English as a considerable source of support, and show no signs of being disappointed; but the British visitors incline more readily to out-of-door entertainments—in the true spirit of people upon their travels; and hence it is that they appear in such force at the balls provided on Mondays at the Tintillerie Gardens—balls given by the benevolent society of the town, in a true spirit of French generosity—and intended mainly for the humbler classes of French, but at which our countrymen are extensively represented in the capacity of lookers-on. Here they have the opportunity of seeing the waiters who have served them at dinner figuring in the dance, and the young ladies who superintend the washing of their clothes assisting at the same amusement. The English visitors must be greatly in the way at such a place, but can partake with propriety of one common attraction—the fireworks with which the entertainments conclude.

The Emperor's fête and the fêtes in honour of our Lady of Boulogne occur in the height of the English season. The pilgrimages, which are made in procession, give the streets a very animated appearance during the latter half of August; and any person who should say that during that time he had not revelled in girls, white muslin, and flowers, to his eyes' content, must indeed be difficult to satisfy.

There are certain amusements in Boulogne which are not dependent upon special provision, but arise out of the regular course of things. Foremost among these—as at certain places on our own coast—is that of seeing the steamers out and in. I am not quite sure that this is not a greater attraction to some people than is afforded by the Etablissement itself. There are some, of course, who go to speed the parting, or welcome the coming guest, as the case may be; but the majority attend upon these occasions in a spirit of sheer curiosity—a morbid craving to know who is going away, or, still worse, the depraved appetite already alluded to, for the spectacle of suffering presented by the new arrivals. For whatever the state of the sea, there are always some among the latter who are the worse for it—who cling to a basin as a chronic appurtenance while afloat, and would be overcome by a painted ship upon a painted ocean, if they had an idea that either were real. These infatuated sight-seers do not, as a rule, include the everybody of Boulogne. The *habitués* form a class of themselves, and may be considered as so many mental dram-drinkers or opium-eaters, who, given up to the baneful practice, find themselves unable to overcome it. Now and then one of the number, who has gone on board a crossward-bound boat, and lingered a little too long, gets taken over to Folkestone. The involuntary voyage is inconvenient in any case, but more especially to one who has sought 'the land of the free' for proverbial reasons, and is not in a position, therefore, to enjoy the protection of the British flag. Occasionally, however, when a lengthened sojourn upon foreign

soil has robbed it of its original recommendation, instances have been known of such a mistake being met half way, and turned to profitable account. England, with all her faults, is found welcome when an alien land has proved ungrateful. Inadvertences of this kind, however, are usually transacted at night, and by the London boat.

The least welcome comers by the boats of any kind, are the English excursionists. They swarm on Sundays and Mondays during the season, to the great scandal of the resident visitors, who, I suspect, would cheerfully enter into arrangements with the French government for disposing of them in the most cruel manner ever conceived by despot. And it must be confessed that these holiday Britons are nothing less than nuisances. They are not uniformly sober when they arrive, and their condition has at least not improved when they depart. What becomes of them during the greater part of their stay, nobody knows. There must be special haunts provided for them; for, after a fitful appearance in the port, and in the principal thoroughfares, during which time their tendency seems to be to buy brandy and grapes, they disappear until a little before the departure of their boat, when they again swarm about, and do their best to confirm the unfavourable impression formed of them on landing. Some among them doubtless are more correct in their deportment; but unfortunately for the reputation of these weekly expeditions, the exceptions to the rule are not recognised as excursionists. It is right to mention this fact, and, of course, the tourists who do not abuse the privilege of refreshing themselves economically upon foreign soil, who do not 'chaff' the natives, and who do not make ludicrous demonstrations of their inability to speak French, are not included in my remarks.

I have said that nobody knows what becomes of our chance countrymen during a considerable portion of their stay. I suspect, however, that they are taken to some of the English drinking-places, which are among the least lovely attractions

of Boulogne. I have not had the curiosity to gain personal experience of these hostelrys in the present day; but it may be supposed that they have the same characteristics as of old; and a few years ago there were several which the student of manners would find well worth a visit. The principal of these was kept by a retired steward and stewardess, whilome of the General Steam Navigation Company's service, who, of course, made their new abode as much like their old one as possible. The bar was in appearance a compound of a cabin and a cupboard, where bottles were mixed up with brushes, and kept steady upon their shelves by means of ledges, while napkins, in evident commission, were thrust into every vacant space. The parlour was long in proportion to its width, furnished with narrow tables, with a continuous sofa fixed to the wall, from which you instinctively rose with caution, expecting to knock your head against an upper berth. The host had that nautico-commercial appearance which belongs to his class, from pursers downwards: he wore a round jacket, and was clean shaven except as to a tuft upon his chin; he might have been mistaken for an American, as nautico-commercial-looking people generally may. The hostess was a stewardess still; she could never be mistaken for anything else. That fatigued look of hers belonged unmistakably to ship-board. Weariness, indeed, seemed her normal condition, and I fancy that her sleep tired her quite as much as any exertion she underwent while awake. She appeared to half pity, half despise, the guests, and handed them their refreshments as if she hoped they might do them good, but did not see much chance for them. Her connection, being principally nautical, understood her, so that no harm was done; and her husband was as good-tempered as people connected with ships usually are when they are not responsible for anything the elements may choose to do. He prided himself upon his foreign liquors, and flattered himself that there was not a man in Boulogne who could give you

a better glass of cognac or scheidam. Very different from this was another house not far off. There the host and hostess were of the land, and nothing but the land. They had never crossed the sea until they came to Boulogne, and nobody could tell what had induced them even to make the excursion; the surmise, however, being that the motive had something to do with the breakdown of a business at home. Their house, and everything belonging to it, was British to any extent. The landlord thanked his blessed stars that though he had been twenty years in the country, he did not know a word of the confounded lingo. His wife knew a dozen words, I dare say. His daughter was the only one of the family who had profited in this respect by residence in France. Indeed, she would playfully declare herself a native of the country, where, indeed, she was born; but her father always dissipated the idea by quoting the well-known parallel about the stable and the horse. At this hostelry there was a British bar, where British refreshments were served out in British style—pewter pots, and little measures of the same metal for spirits included; there was a British coffee-room, conducted upon the British *lucus a non lucendo* principle of not supplying coffee, and constituted with thoroughly British regard to the discomfort of its patrons, who included a considerable proportion of British drunkards, as you may suppose. They were a strange set—the *habitués* of that room. There were a proportion of gentlemen among them; but a long course of sporting, and not being able to pay, had so changed their original appearance and habits, as to leave less distinction than could be desired between them and the common people—the latter indeed being by far the more respectable of the two classes. But the saddest specimen among them all was not only a gentleman, but a scholar. He was a 'professor'—that is to say, he taught English and German to anybody who would learn it, and would have taught Latin and Greek, but the grown men of the town did not want those

languages, and the professor was not exactly the man to whom they would send their children. So this gentleman and scholar attended to his pupils just sufficiently to enable him to hold together in some mysterious lodging, and pay his tavern score after his work was done. He was of remarkably handsome and intelligent appearance, but disguised in most ways, and more particularly in a proverbial way associated with refreshment, towards the end of the evening. He was not one of those spurious persons, of whom it is said that they can be gentlemen when they choose to be so. He was always so without choosing, and was curiously ill-assorted to the company he most affected. I doubt if there was one amongst them who understood half he said, with the exception of a cashiered officer, who sometimes capped his quotations, and always inclined more towards him than any of the rest. The general conversation of the room, I should here observe, was not like that of the rival house. You never heard anything about the wind and the weather, which were the usual starting-points at the nautical place; the talk was all of home, and not the best phases of home society by any means, the common ground of the talkers being that kind of life in London which is represented by 'Bell's.'

There are stranger places than the taverns I have mentioned in most towns; and it would be strange indeed if there were no haunts of the kind in Boulogne. Here, as elsewhere, one-half of the world knows very little of the habits of the other half. Paris itself is full of quiet families, who are as far removed from the floating population of travellers as if they were at Timbuctoo—dignitaries of domesticity who hold restaurants to be wrong and cafés horrible, and recognise theatres only in connexion with the highest art. In Boulogne, as I have hinted, the British settlement includes persons who decline having anything to do with the amusements even of the best class of visitors; who may go to the hotels to see special friends, but regard the society of the Etablisse-

ment as a great deal too promiscuous. Among the British, as among the French, *il y a fagots et fagots*. But it must be said, for the outward manners of the place, that they are decorous in the highest degree. The streets, which know no disorderly passengers at any time, are deserted by eleven at night; the latest places where people stay are the two English clubs, and these carry quietness to an extent unknown to clubs elsewhere. For the order prevailing in the town we are of course indebted to the French authorities, and France generally is a proverbial pattern to England in this respect. But the influence of the British visitors has had one effect which is very uncommon among our neighbours. On Sundays, at least, two-thirds of the shops are closed, and an air pervades the place which is at least suggestive of rest. The French make holiday, I suppose, but there is no demonstration of festivity in the town, and the day is decidedly more quiet than the other days in the week. To be sure, there is a concert at the Etablissement in the afternoon, and a performance at the theatre at night; but the French will be French, especially in their own country; and if the English to some extent assist at these amusements, it is doubtless upon the principle of my friend who got wet through in the Rue Napoléon—that of doing in France as the French do. There is a little dancing, too, at the Etablissement on Sunday evenings, and some of the English help even at that; but the latter are in a decided minority, and I have no doubt are properly looked down upon by their more orthodox friends. For the rest, it must be said for the British, that they do everything they moderately can to make the Sabbath respected among their neighbours. The gentlemen put on chimney-pot hats instead of the deer-stalkers or wide-awakes, which they have deemed sufficient homage to the week, and the ladies wear, more rich, perhaps, but certainly less eccentric costumes than is their every-day habit. The latter change is the more remarkable, as costumes of a fancy character have

been a marked feature of Boulogne society for the last season or two. The tendency of the walking-dress is to become as much like a bathing-dress as possible, while the tendency of the bathing-dress is to meet the walking-dress half way. One of these days, perhaps, we shall find that the two costumes can be worn in common; and it need scarcely be remarked that this is a consummation devoutly to be wished for by the head of families who have to pay for both. At the English chapels on Sundays the effect of the female toilettes is perhaps a little too suggestive of the Etablissement; but there are modifications

observed as to some details. Thus, some ladies who wear hats everywhere else, make a point of wearing bonnets at church. You may observe the same difference in London. I suppose a bonnet is less worldly than a hat, though it is difficult to see why.

Pending a solution of this important problem, I will conclude my sketch of the British settlement at Boulogne. The French are of course a matter of detail in the place, and may be left to be dealt with by such future travellers as may find anything new to say about them.

SIDNEY L. BLANCHARD.

THE GRANVILLE BALL.

I WENT to Ramsgate lately; not
To walk upon the pier.
I saw a vulgar little boy;
Said I, 'My lad, look here—
Go call a fly.' Some two or three
Such vehicles were near.
That *gamin* did as he was bid. He hailed, with shrill 'Aboy,'
A four-wheeled trap, and touched his cap, although a vulgar boy.

The flyman drove his gallant screw
Along the road that well he knew,
And all should know as well.
It was a raw and murky night
Through which he steered his course aright,
Up to the summit of the height
Where stands the new hotel.
And, having paid the man his fare,
I straight engaged a bed-room there.
And in that room I did array
Myself in garments rich and gay,
For which may I have cash to pay
When Morris sends the bill!
(As, from acquaintance I have made
With other artists in his trade,
I'm rather more than half afraid,
He, some fine morning, will.)
But while, in that apartment high,
Madly I struggled with my tie,
And got it more and more awry,
Sounded the third quadrille.
The music of the Sappers' band
Did not assist my trembling hand.

Ah, well! The time has come and gone:
The vision fades that brightly shone;
And from the cloud of beauty bright
One form remains, 'a part of sight,'
As Byron says, you know.
He did not waltz, that lordly bard,
Or he, perchance, had trodden hard
(Prophetically off his guard)
On Mrs Beecher's toe.
But no relation this, at all,
Has to the Fugin-Granville Ball.

What need that I should tell you more
 Of dances danced beyond the Nore?
 What need that I should tell you less
 Than lies in that one word, 'Success?'
 And yet, I'd some thought, I may freely confess—
 If, instead of a page
 To enlighten the age,
 I were granted a chapter my views to express—
 Of mentioning other adornments than dress.
 Go, look! ere you carelessly sneer or deride:
 'Tis only a ball-room, and by the sea-side.
 The cockneys repair,
 For the health of the air,
 To Ramsgate, and miss their amusements when there.
 Henceforward, no loss of the kind they sustain,
 But a lesson in taste they may count as a gain.
 * * *

We danced until four, and (don't name it in Gath)
 We smoked until seven, like fury.
 And the rising young barrister rose before eight—
 Without going to bed—and to town he went straight;
 As the railway could take him, for cases won't wait;
 Though he went into court rather more of a mind,
 I fancy, for taking a Turkish bath
 Than addressing a British jury.

HEADS OF SOCIETY.

THE 'heads' in the Illustration are not 'heads of society,' in the sense of being leaders in rank or fashion. They do not represent that distinguished Upper Five Hundred who may be considered the officers to the rank and file of the Upper Ten Thousand. They are rather types of the many classes of society that exist in this metropolis—of different 'circles,' some more, some less, associated, and others not associated at all.

Of these circles what an endless variety go to make up society, in the broad sense of the term! You cannot take up a newspaper without seeing them referred to as so many little worlds:—

'It is whispered in fashionable circles—'

'A rumour is current in legal circles—'

'The present subject of conversation in military circles—'

'A question much affecting naval circles—'

'A case of great interest in medical circles—'

'A report is prevalent in theatrical circles—'

'There has been some excitement in sporting circles—'

'There is considerable discussion in artistic circles—'

These are all stock phrases. And in addition we hear continually of 'financial circles,' and 'commercial circles,' of 'serious circles,' and even 'comic circles,' when they happen to be agitated by questions affecting their opinions or tastes. 'Circles likely to be well informed' are continually appealed to, and 'circles likely to be mis-informed,' though never seriously invoked, have no doubt many representatives. Then there are other circles which do not generally meet with recognition, but which exist for all that. We should be somewhat scandalized to see an announcement in the journals that 'swindling circles' had been thrown into a painful state of excitement by a new development of the detective art, or that 'burglarious circles' were pervaded by considerable apprehension in consequence of the invention of a new alarm which was likely to come into general use. But there are veritable circles of the kind, doubtless, where such subjects have an engrossing interest, and where matters of mere national or social import are deemed unworthy of notice. In all purely professional



SELECTIONS FROM ARTISTS' SKETCH BOOKS.—AT BOULOGNE.

Drawn by Gordon Thomson.



Drawn by Alfred Thompson.]

THE NEW





Drawn by William Brunton.]

‘RESPECTABLE’ PEOPLE.

[See ‘Head of Society.’]

society, indeed, politics meet with but little attention. Lawyers in good practice—unless they have an eye to Parliament and public life—seldom trouble themselves much about such matters. Medical men even more rarely avow political opinions, unless ‘standing’ for some office in which party considerations are concerned. Artists and actors have usually the vaguest notions of public affairs. It is not, therefore, to be supposed that persons who wage war with society, and who make the violation of the law a profession, will care much to learn that her Majesty’s ministers have successfully vindicated the national honour, or that they have been doing something to ameliorate the condition of the honest and respectable portion of the public.

These considerations, however, carry us somewhat beyond the bounds of our subject—the sketch on the opposite page—in which the artist has not descended to the lower depths referred to. The ‘heads of society’ which he has so well portrayed, our readers need not be afraid to meet. The greater number may be safely encountered at dinner-tables and in drawing-rooms, and none need give cause for apprehension out of doors, even on a dark night. Here we have very fair types of many ‘respectable’ people. A few years ago we should not have been so sure of the fact; for the last decade has made such changes in the outward appearance of Britons of both sexes, that their very mothers would scarcely know them again, if they did not happen to be previously informed. In the men the difference is more particularly marked. In the year of grace 1853, that gentleman near the left-hand upper corner of the plate, bearded and moustached, and wearing a ‘Melton’ hat, would have been taken for a foreigner probably, and a swindler certainly. He would scarcely get beyond the door-mat in a respectable house, and if he *did* manage to intrigue his way into the dining-room, a sharp eye would be kept upon the spoons. Look, too, at the gentleman in the travelling cap and neat beard and moustache, a

little below to the right. Would any prudent person in those days have had anything to do with such a man in connexion with a pack of cards? or anything to do with him at all, unless under compulsion? Even that cheerful-looking gentleman still further below and nearer the centre would have been noted as having too much whisker to be strictly honest, while the moustache would have condemned him in the eyes of all right-minded persons. As for the men with beards utterly uncontrolled—of which there are several specimens in the plate, and who have so many representatives in London society—they would have been considered as so many models for artists, or maniacs, or ruffians on their own account. When the ‘moustache movement’ was first suggested, the ‘Times’ declared that the appendage in question belonged to only two classes of men—the guard and the black-guard, and prophesied that it would never be tolerated in English society. Even so great an authority as the ‘Times’ cannot be always right, and that it was wrong in this case is apparent to the naked eye. In 1870 the ‘heads’ we have noted belong to the most ordinary specimens of our countrymen whom we encounter in the streets and the parks, in steamboats and railway carriages, in private houses and in public assemblies. The most brigand-like among them may appertain to persons pursuing such serious pursuits as banking and stock-broking—for even City men, though late to yield, have caught the infection and are almost as deeply marked with it as any other class. And it is not impossible that one of the most flagrant beards in the collection may belong to a clergyman of the Church of England. Such things have been of late, and are so still, we believe; and we have never heard that even the bishop whose hirsute appendages were made a public topic a few years ago, has ever condescended to shave. Barristers have been long since abandoned to the new fashion; and although the leading men of the profession still set their faces against

it, and beards and briefs are not considered to be frequently associated, it is justifiable, at any rate, in the case of those who are members of Volunteer Corps, and who have a military as well as a legal character to support.

Our artist—confining his attention to 'heads'—has not brought to notice many changes which have presented themselves of late years in the outward man of Britons. But the most marked of all comes within his scope. Where are the 'stocks' of other days? A few specimens may still be found; but we are for the most part a bare-necked nation; and the Englishman who, a few years ago, made it a matter of stern principle to wear his collar standing so high and so inflexibly as to endanger his ears, now actually turns it down! It is not so long ago that Lord Byron suffered social martyrdom for indulging in this easy fashion—for many were of opinion that it was the collar rather than the character which made the noble poet so obnoxious to English society. It is certain, indeed, that some of his contemporaries deserved greater condemnation than his unfortunate lordship, and if they did not incur it, it must have been because they bore irreproachable collars, and did not give outward offence. The present generation is happily exempt from this kind of control, and may go about with no cravat to speak of, and collars which concern nobody but the wearer. It is a great reform, and has made everybody so comfortable that the nation has ceased to care for any other. Who shall say how much we owe to the freedom given to our necks, the absence of political agitation in these latter days? The Crimean war, to which these changes are admittedly due, may

have accomplished greater ends than it is customary to suppose.

And now let us look at the ladies. They are at least as much changed as the men. As in our sketch the peg-tops are concealed in the one case, so is the crinoline in the other. But the 'heads' even are not the heads of ten years ago. Who would then have dreamed of the alligator bonnet or the turban hat? At that period bonnets were nothing more than caps, and hats of the varieties then known were generally reserved for riding. As for the style of the *coiffure*, it was then quite uniform, and any deviation was considered in bad taste. Now its name is legion, and ladies wear their hair exactly as it pleases them—with due regard to the pleasing of other people, of course.

We say nothing of the Highway-men hats, of the Robespierre cravats, of the walking-sticks, which are finding favour with ladies. The first are general already, and the second are not noticed as very particular. The third, we fancy, are not likely to hold their ground except among very reckless young ladies, at very wild watering places. We note the existence of these innovations only to mark the complete metamorphosis that our countrywomen, as well as men, have undergone. That a great many of the changes are for the better, is generally admitted in the one case as the other. But several questions involved in that of the ladies present such astounding difficulties, that we will not venture to grapple with them. We therefore respectfully but firmly decline to draw a moral in this matter, or to hazard a deduction of any greater profundity than the remark that we live in sensation times.



WHO WROTE ROBINSON CRUSOE?

DANIEL DEFOE, of course; the title-page says so, and ought to be believed. True; but it is nevertheless a curious fact that some persons have believed otherwise. There was no author originally named on the title-page, when the work first made its appearance a century and a half ago, save the far-famed Crusoe himself; and other circumstances led to a division of opinion upon the subject. It is, however, satisfactory to know that the evidence in support of the popular opinion is far stronger than that in the opposite direction. We say 'satisfactory,' seeing that it is not pleasant to have one's favourite idols knocked down (as Dick Whittington's cat has recently been), unless for the very strongest reasons. The connection between the names of Alexander Selkirk, Robinson Crusoe, and Daniel Defoe is so remarkable, that something must be known about the first before the relation between the second and the third can be understood; for the triad consists of a myth between two realities.

Alexander Selkirk, a Fifeshire man bred up to the sea, started off about the beginning of the last century on a voyage to America, half commercial and half piratical, in a way much in fashion in those days. Captain Stradling, commander of the ship, having taken some offence against Selkirk, put him on shore on the uninhabited island of Juan Fernandez, with one day's food, a sea-chest, clothes, bedding, a little tobacco, a few books and nautical instruments, some powder and ball, a gun, knife, axe, and a kettle or boiler. Thus was the lonely Scot, on a September day in 1704, left to shift for himself, on an island about eighteen miles long by six broad, and at least four hundred miles distant from the nearest mainland (the Pacific coast of South America). When he recovered from the first feeling of dismay and despondency, he set to work and built two huts of pimento wood, one as a dining

and bed room, the other as a kitchen; he roofed them with long grass, and by degrees gave them a warm lining of goat-skins. Strips of the same kind of wood supplied him with fire and light, burning very clear, and emitting an agreeable, fragrant odour. His chief food was boiled goats' flesh and crawfish, seasoned with pimento fruit, but sadly in need of a little salt, of which he had none save the brackish bitter salt of sea-water. When his clothes were worn out he made goat-skin garments, using a nail for a needle and narrow strips of bark or skin for thread. As for shoes, he soon learned to do without them altogether. Many cats and goats were found on the island; the former helped to scare away the rats, which at first were very troublesome; while the goats served him as playfellows and as a supply of food. While his ammunition lasted, he shot down the goats; when it was exhausted he caught them by running; and so expert did he become that he could run down any of them. Once he fell over a precipice while thus engaged, and only escaped destruction by falling on the animal on the beach below. During his stay on the island he appropriated five hundred goats to food and clothing, and set free another five hundred after marking them on the ears. (Thirty years afterwards, when Anson's crew landed on the island, the first goat they shot was one of those which Selkirk had thus marked.) When his knife was worn out he forged others from old iron hoops. Thus did the lonely man pass four years and four months; when, in February, 1709, he was rescued by a vessel commanded by Captain Woodes Rogers. Although he had some difficulty in returning to the use of speech, and in reconciling himself to the ship's provisions and usages, he gradually became fitted to act as mate to the ship, in which he came to England in 1711.

Such was the true story of Alexander Selkirk, in which, it will be

seen, there were no Indians and no man Friday. The story became incorporated in an account of Rogers's voyage. Sir Richard Steele drew public attention to the matter in No. 26 of the 'Englishman' (Dec. 1st, 1713). He said: 'I had the pleasure frequently to converse with the man soon after his arrival in England in the year 1711. It was a matter of great curiosity to hear him, as he is a man of good sense, give an account,' &c., &c. After presenting the outline of the narrative, Steele adds: 'Even if I had not been led into his character and story, I could have discovered that he had been much separated from company, by his aspect and gesture; there was a strong but cheerful seriousness in his manner, and a certain disregard to the ordinary things about him, as if he had been sunk in thought.' Another form in which the account appeared was under the title of 'Providence Displayed; or, a Surprising Account of Mr. Alexander Selkirk, Master of a Merchantman called the Cinque Ports,' &c.

In 1711, then, Selkirk came to England; in 1712 and 1713 accounts of his adventures were published. And now we come to the second name in the before-mentioned triad. In the spring of 1719 a new book appeared with a very long title:—'The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner, who lived Eight and Twenty Years all alone on an uninhabited Island on the Coast of America, near the Mouth of the Great River of Oroonoke; having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, when all the Men perished but himself. With an Account how he was at last strangely delivered by Pyrates. Written by Himself.' The work created a prodigious sensation; four editions were sold in four months. The Preface was written as if an editor had simply arranged a Narrative prepared by Robinson Crusoe himself. In the autumn of the same year appeared a Sequel, with the title, 'The Further Adventures of Robinson Crusoe: Being the Second and Last Part of his Life,

and of the Strange Surprising Account of his Travels round other Parts of the Globe. Written by Himself. To which is added a Map of the World, in which is delineated the Voyages of Robinson Crusoe.' Incited evidently by the profitable and continuous sale, those concerned in the matter published in 1720 another Sequel, 'Serious Reflexions during the Life of Robinson Crusoe, with his Vision of the Angelic World.' But this was a failure; the public, enamoured of his Adventures, cared little for his 'Reflexions.'

The wonderful success of Robinson Crusoe (the first part, which is the Robinson Crusoe of scores of editions) was mainly due to a belief in its thorough truthfulness. Its probabilities and improbabilities were alike so masterly rendered as to stamp upon it an impress of verity. The public did not at first associate the book in any way with Daniel Defoe; but this was speedily done by other literary men of the day; one of whom, Charles Gildes, published in the autumn of 1719 'The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Mr. D. de F., of London, who lived above Fifty Years by himself in the Kingdom of North and South Britain. The various Shapes he has Appear'd in, and the Discoveries he has made for the benefit of his Country. In a Dialogue between him and his Man Friday. With Remarks Serious and Comical upon the Life of Crusoe.' It was a poor affair, just sufficient to show that Defoe was believed to be the real Crusoe, and to point him out as a target for his many enemies (Defoe was always in hot water as a pamphleteer and political writer) to shoot at.

A question arose soon afterwards, and has been raised many times since, whether Defoe really owed anything to Selkirk's story; and if any, how much? What arrangement he made with his publisher is not known, but both of them evidently wished the story of Robinson Crusoe to be taken as mainly (if not wholly) true. No sooner had the first volume (*the Crusoe*) appeared than numerous abridgments were

unfairly published. In the Preface to the Second Volume Defoe complained of this, saying: 'The injury these men do the proprietor of this work is a practice all honest men abhor; and he believes he may challenge them to show the difference between that and robbery on the highway, or breaking open a house.' He pointed out that the abridging had been mainly effected by leaving out the moral reflexions, and added: 'By this they leave the work naked of its brightest ornaments. And if they would, at the same time, pretend that the Author had supplied the story out of his invention, they take from it the improvement which alone recommends that invention to wise and good men.'

That the author or editor of '*Robinson Crusoe*' was Daniel Defoe, soon became generally admitted; but throughout the last century the other question above adverted to was much discussed. By some the work was ascribed to Arbutnot, by others to Harley, Earl of Oxford. There is a memorandum in the handwriting of Thomas Warton, the poet laureate (in the British Museum), which, under date July 10th, 1774, runs as follows: 'In the year 1759 I was told by the Rev. Benjamin Holloway, Rector of Middleton Stony, in Oxfordshire, then about seventy years of age, and in the early part of his life domestic chaplain to Lord Sunderland, that he had often heard Lord Sunderland say, that Lord Oxford, while prisoner in the Tower of London, wrote the first volume of the "*History of Robinson Crusoe*," merely as an amusement under confinement, and gave it to Daniel Defoe, who frequently visited Lord Oxford in the Tower, and was one of his pamphlet writers. That Defoe, by Lord Oxford's permission, printed it as his own, and, encouraged by its extraordinary success, added himself the second volume, the inferiority of which is generally acknowledged. Mr. Holloway also told me, from Lord Sunderland, that Lord Oxford dictated some parts of the manuscript to Defoe. Mr. Holloway was a grave,

conscientious clergyman, not vain of telling anecdotes, very learned, particularly a good orientalist, author of some theological works, bred at Eton School, and a Master of Arts of St. John's College, Cambridge. He used to say that "*Robinson Crusoe*," at its first publication, and for some time afterwards, was universally received and credited as a genuine history. A fictitious narrative of this sort was then a new thing.' This kind of testimony, it will be seen, is not very reliable; for Warton, who wrote the memorandum, heard the story from Mr. Holloway, who heard it from Lord Sunderland; but Lord Sunderland, from whom did he hear it? Another form of accusation was that Defoe derived the story, not from the Earl of Oxford, but from Alexander Selkirk: 'The public curiosity respecting him being excited, he was induced to put his papers into the hands of Defoe, to arrange and form them into a regular narrative. These papers must have been drawn up after he left Juan Fernandez, as he had no means of recording his transactions there. From this account of Selkirk, Defoe took the idea of writing a more extensive work, "*The Romance of Robinson Crusoe*," and very dishonestly defrauded the original proprietor of his share.' There were other forms which the accusation assumed, but these were the principal.

The refutation has been tolerably complete. It has been shown that the relations between Harley and Defoe at the time were such as to render the former little likely to place himself in the power of the latter; that there is nothing in Harley's style to denote a power of imitating the remarkable style in which '*Robinson Crusoe*' is written; and that the first and second parts of the celebrated work are evidently from the same pen, however far the second may be from equalling the first in interest. And as to Defoe having stolen the ideas of Selkirk, the theory will not stand the test of scrutiny. Except that a man was left on a desolate island to shift for himself, the romance and the reality have very little in common. Isaac Disraeli,

in his charming 'Curiosities of Literature,' said: 'No one has, or perhaps could have converted the history of Selkirk into the wonderful story we possess but Defoe himself.' Sir Walter Scott said: 'Really the story of Selkirk, which had been published a few years before, appears to have furnished our author with so little beyond the bare idea of a man living on an uninhabited island, that it seems quite immaterial whether he took the hint from that or any other similar story.' The late Archbishop Whately wrote a remarkable Essay to prove that Defoe could not have taken Alexander Selkirk as a model. The story was meant to be received as true; and the archbishop notices the rare skill with which this has been accomplished: 'One part of the act by which Defoe gives his tale an air of reality consists in his frequently recording minute particulars and trifling occurrences which lead to no result, and therefore are just such as you would be likely to find in a real diary, and which most writers of fiction would omit, because there seems no reason at all for mentioning them except that they really took place. Another apparent indication of reality is, that such improbabilities as there are lie precisely in the opposite quarter from that in which we should expect to find them.' He gives instances to illustrate his meaning, too long to be quoted here, but quite sufficient to support the statement that Defoe wished his '*Robinson Crusoe*' to be regarded as an independent and veritable history—with what marvellous success, we can all bear witness. The Rev. Mr. Lee, in his recently-published '*Life and Newly-Discovered Writings of Daniel Defoe*,' gives a prodigious list of more than two hundred and fifty works which may fairly be attributed to his pen; and among them there is amply sufficient to show Defoe's almost matchless skill as a story-teller. Mr. Lee points out that the '*Serious Reflections*,' forming the third volume or series, however inferior to the other two (especially the first) in interest, bear internal marks of Defoe's tone of thought on such matters.

We may, then, safely settle down into the belief that our dearly-cherished book was written, not by Arbuthnot, nor by the Earl of Oxford, nor by Selkirk, but by Daniel Defoe; that the idea was merely suggested to him by the known but brief narrative of Selkirk's life; and that the story is so wonderfully kept up, that, if not true, it ought to have been. Let us not be surprised that several places lay claim to the honour of having been that at which Defoe wrote his book. Halifax puts in a plea; so does Gateshead; so does Hartley, in Kent; so does Harrow Alley, Whitechapel; but the probabilities are in favour of Defoe's house at Stoke Newington.

We have already spoken of the trusty belief entertained by most readers in Defoe's time in the truthfulness of this ever-fresh story. So it has been, in a great measure, throughout the whole period of exactly a century and a half which has elapsed since the book was published; and so it is to this day, among a much larger number of persons than we are apt to suppose. So vivid is the impression produced by the facts and the language of the narrative, that a sentiment of truthfulness seems to pervade it. Many a regret has been felt, perhaps many a tear shed, when the information has been received that '*Robinson Crusoe* is not true.' Nay, instances have been known of persons believing that the veritable Crusoe stood before them, in his own proper corporeal person. One such anecdote was told of Madame de Talleyrand, wife of the great diplomatist—a lady said to have been more remarkable for beauty than for sense. Many versions of the story have been given. One, in Thomas Moore's '*Journal*,' is to the following effect: 'One day her husband having told her that Denon (the great explorer of Egyptian antiquities) was coming to dinner, bid her read a little of his book upon Egypt, just published, in order that she might be enabled to say something to him upon it; adding that he would leave the volume for her on his study-table. He forgot this, however, and madame,

on going into the study, found a volume of "*Robinson Crusoe*" on the table, which having read very attentively, she was not long in opening upon Denon at dinner, about the desert island, his manner of living, &c., to the great astonishment of poor Denon, who could not make head or tail of what she meant. At last, upon her saying, "*Et puis ce cher Vendredi*!" he perceived that she took him for no less a person than *Robinson Crusoe*. The allusion to 'that dear Friday' must have been delicious. It has been recently stated, on apparently good authority, that the dinner in question took place at Paris in 1806. Miss Dickenson, daughter of the celebrated mezzotinto engraver, was *dame de compagnie* to madame at the time. In her version of the story, Talleyrand did not promise to place Denon's book on the study-table, but told madame to go and procure the book at a library or bookseller's. The lady forgot the title, but thought she could not be far wrong in asking for 'the celebrated book of travels.' The worthy bibliophile deemed it probable that she meant '*Robinson Crusoe*,' and gave her that book accordingly—with the result noticed above.

But, unless one story has been built upon another, or two stories on the same incident, it is very remarkable that something similar was said to have occurred in Paris far back in the last century. In Horace Walpole's letter to Sir Horace Mann, under date October 22nd, 1741, mention is made of one Sir Thomas Robinson, of Rokeby Park, who was sometimes called 'Long Sir Thomas,' on account of his lofty stature, and sometimes 'New Robinson Crusoe.' In a note it is remarked: 'He was a tall, uncouth man, and his stature was often rendered still more remarkable by his hunting dress—a postilion's cap, a light green jacket, and buckskin breeches. He was liable to sudden whims. Once he set off on a sudden in his hunting suit to visit his sister, who was married and settled at Paris. He arrived while there was a large company at dinner. The servant

announced M. Robinson; and he came in, to the great amazement of the guests. Among others, a French abbé thrice lifted his fork to his mouth, and thrice laid it down with an eager stare of surprise. Unable to restrain his curiosity any longer, he burst out with—"Excuse me, sir; are you the famous Robinson Crusoe so remarkable in history?" There are other stories afloat more or less similar, one connected with the name of Sir George Robinson, who lived many years after the Sir Thomas here mentioned.

So lasting is the name of Robinson Crusoe, that certain relics are assigned or set down to this redoubtable hero because they really belonged to Alexander Selkirk. Edinburgh has recently acquired two such relics. It appears that when Selkirk was on his island at Juan Fernandez, he had a chest which was very useful in his scanty furniture. He brought this chest with him when Captain Woodes Rogers conveyed him back to Scotland. It was used by Selkirk at Largs to contain his clothes; and after he left that place it remained for a long period in the possession of his relatives. Some years ago it was sold to a gentleman in London. Recently, an opportunity having occurred for securing it for Scotland, Sir David Baxter purchased it, and presented it to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. The chest is made of mahogany or some similar wood, and has the initials of Alexander Selkirk rudely cut in it. Another article, presented at the same time to the same museum, is a cup, carved out of a cocoa-nut by Selkirk while on the island. Three more (so-called) Robinson Crusoe relics are carefully preserved in Scotland, viz.: Selkirk's musket, his brown ware can, and his walking-stick.

P.S. Mr. Hotten has just published a new edition of '*Robinson Crusoe*,' printed *verbatim* from the original edition, in all the homely but vigorous language of Defoe—eschewing the so-called 'improvements' of modern editors.

THE BONSPIEL.

A LOITERER in the rear of the army of tourists who annually invade the northern division of the kingdom, I found myself towards the middle of one November the guest of an old friend in Dundrumshire. There is nothing particularly picturesque or attractive in this region of Scotland. It is a rolling country, with here and there a range of hills, red-ploughed lands interspersed with tracts of pasture, long stretches of heath and moss, and bogs of rich black peat. It did not take long to exhaust the lions of the neighbourhood—the heap of stones in a field that marks the site of an old keep of the Armstrongs—their seat furthest from the scene of their raids;—the parish church, which had once been barricaded against the ‘colick’ (collect) curates, and in which one of these unhappy wights had been pelted in the pulpit by enraged Presbyterians; the more interesting churchyard, with many a moss-grown tombstone (often, I dare say, touched up by Old Mortality), recording that the bones below were those of men who had died to testify against tyranny, perjury, and prelacy; the Haunted Dingle, Slain Man’s Lee, and other secluded spots where Covenanters gathering for prayer had been slaughtered by the ruthless troopers. I soon saw all the show-places, but the greatest sight, as my host, Mr. Maitland, of Headrig Farm, assured me, was yet to come. This was the bonspiel, or curling match, between the adjoining parishes of Dumbog and Knockdunder. Last year our parish—that is, Dumbog—had been beaten, and hence was impatient to retrieve the defeat. But before you can curl you must have ice (though there is a story of some Scotchmen in India who contrived an artificial ground of resin and wax which answered the purpose), and the weather was provokingly mild for the season. As yet there had been barely snow enough to powder the tops of the hills, and not a particle of ice. It really looked as though the spring

might come before a drop of water had been frozen. The state of the weather was, therefore, a subject of deep anxiety from the laird’s ha’ to the codger’s cabin. The minister, himself a ‘keen, keen curler,’ of course rebuked the murmuring of his flock, and preached sermon after sermon inculcating the duty of being thankful for any and every sort of weather: but as the year wore out without any sign of ice, he was evidently put to sad shifts to justify the ways of Providence to men. There were prayers for rain. ‘Why should the same expedient,’ asked the curlers, ‘not be resorted to for the sake of ice?’ The orthodoxy of that part of Dundrumshire was clearly in a dangerous way.

When old Maitland heard that this was a sport I had never witnessed his regrets at the mildness of the season were redoubled. He could not bear the idea of the benighted Southron departing without having seen the noble play. The minister and he vied with each other in proclaiming the merits of the game. It braced the nerves, cheered the spirits, fostered good feelings and genial humanity. ‘Who ever heard of a sick curler?’ asked the farmer. ‘Or a cynical, surly one?’ asked the parson. Whether the malady be moral or physical, the roaring game is the best cure:—

‘Get stanes and a broom; tak’ a season o’ curling,

And the pains o’ disease in a giffy will flee.’

‘Ay, and what says the old maker, Pennycuik?’ cried Maitland, eager to cap the other’s verse.

‘To curl on the ice doth greatly please,]

Being a manly exercise;

It clears the brain, stirs up the native heat,

And gives a gallant appetite for meat.’

And then the two set to fighting their battles o’er again, and showing how games were won. It was an unknown tongue to me. I could make nothing of pat-lids, in-wicks, and out-wicks, hog-scores, and brougs. It was some consolation to the curlers to talk over

their former exploits and arrange their plans for the next. Sandy Ferguson, the smith, used to assist at these conferences, for he was the 'skip,' or leader of the Dumbog party, and a doughty champion with the channel-stanes. Never did 'stroke' of the Oxford or Cambridge boat choose his crew with more anxious care than did Sandy the representatives of Dumbog in the curling match. There was not a man in the parish whom he had not considered from this point of view; and even in the kirk his eyes were continually wandering over the congregation in search of a trusty partisan. It was indeed a serious matter, for was not the honour of Dumbog at stake?

At last the list of players was completed, and the Knockdunder party sent word that they too were ready for the contest. All that was now wanting was the ice, and as the weather was still mild and I had only a few days more to remain, I gave up all hope of being a spectator of the great and to me novel contest. One morning, however, my host burst into my bedroom, soon after daylight, shouting exultingly, 'Hurrah, my lad! it's freezing, freezing. You'll see the play yet!' And off he rushed to consult with Sandy the smith as to the final preparations for the match. If the frost held it was to come off the next day. The intervening hours proved a season of sore trial to the barometers. How they were knocked and knuckled! It was tap-tap on their cases all day long, by way of incessant reminder that the time was critical, and almost a menace that, if they did say 'rain,' it would be the worse for them. How long all faces grew when a rumour came that the ice had cracked; and how heartily that 'dour deevil,' Mungo M'Crabbie, the taxman and general *trouble-fête* of Dumbog, was detested as he went about prophesying thaw!

At night Sandy the skip came up to the farm, in great distress, with the news that Donald Grant, the cobbler, was disabled by rheumatism. Harry Maitland, the farmer's nephew, who had arrived the day

before, was therefore pressed into the service; but the skip had not much faith in him, and insisted on his having some practice with the stones by moonlight on a neighbouring pond. 'I'd rather be out of it,' cried Harry, at supper; 'it's too heavy a responsibility.' 'For shame!' said his cousin Maggie. 'Would you leave Dumbog in the lurch?' 'Faint heart never won fair lady,' chimed in the cheery uncle; 'and there's no saying what may come of it if you are clever at pat-lids and keep well over the hog-score.' At which Maggie's pretty blush told what was, perhaps, no great secret to any one. The eventful morning broke cold and clear, with the frost more intense than ever, and there was general rejoicing. Before ten o'clock there was a large muster from the rival parishes at the scene of the contest. It was a secluded tarn, in a little valley not far from the boundary line between the two districts. The sun sparkled dazzlingly on the fresh snow, the trees gleamed, as it were, in silver lace and tassels, the air was clear and exhilarating, and a bright greyish-blue sky bent over all.

The company is motley both in rank and raiment. There is our laird, a tall, robust man, with a broad kindly face, round which clusters bushy red whiskers, just tinged with grey at the tips, as though the frost had caught them, clad in a suit of rough tweed. He is the near kinsman of a noble house and member for the county, but without any airs of condescension he is chatting familiarly about the chances of the game with Allan Baps, the baker, who, on his part, does not seem particularly oppressed by the honour. Honest Allan knows his shot may perhaps be of as much service to his cause as the big man's. The little gentleman in the grey shooting-coat, with spectacles, is convener of the county; the young man with moustaches, in the Glengarry cap, who is smoking the 'brief plebeian pipe,' and listening deferentially to the instructions of Hugh Muckleworth, tailor, the Knockdunder 'skip,' is Lord Cowdenknowes, the

Earl of Doull's son—his mother, you know, is a Farintosh. There are others of the gentry here, who have come either to play or to look on, but one and all are fraternizing pleasantly with the farmers, and shopkeepers, and all the small folks of the country side, who, on their part, manifest the same excellent spirit, not forgetting respect but avoiding servility. Every class is represented. It is, in fact, a microcosm of society, but the grades are levelled, the ladder is on the ground. Here all meet on the common footing of sport and good-fellowship, and the physical frost has for the moment wrought a moral thaw. The rink is a charmed circle, and it is a pity men can meet within it so seldom.

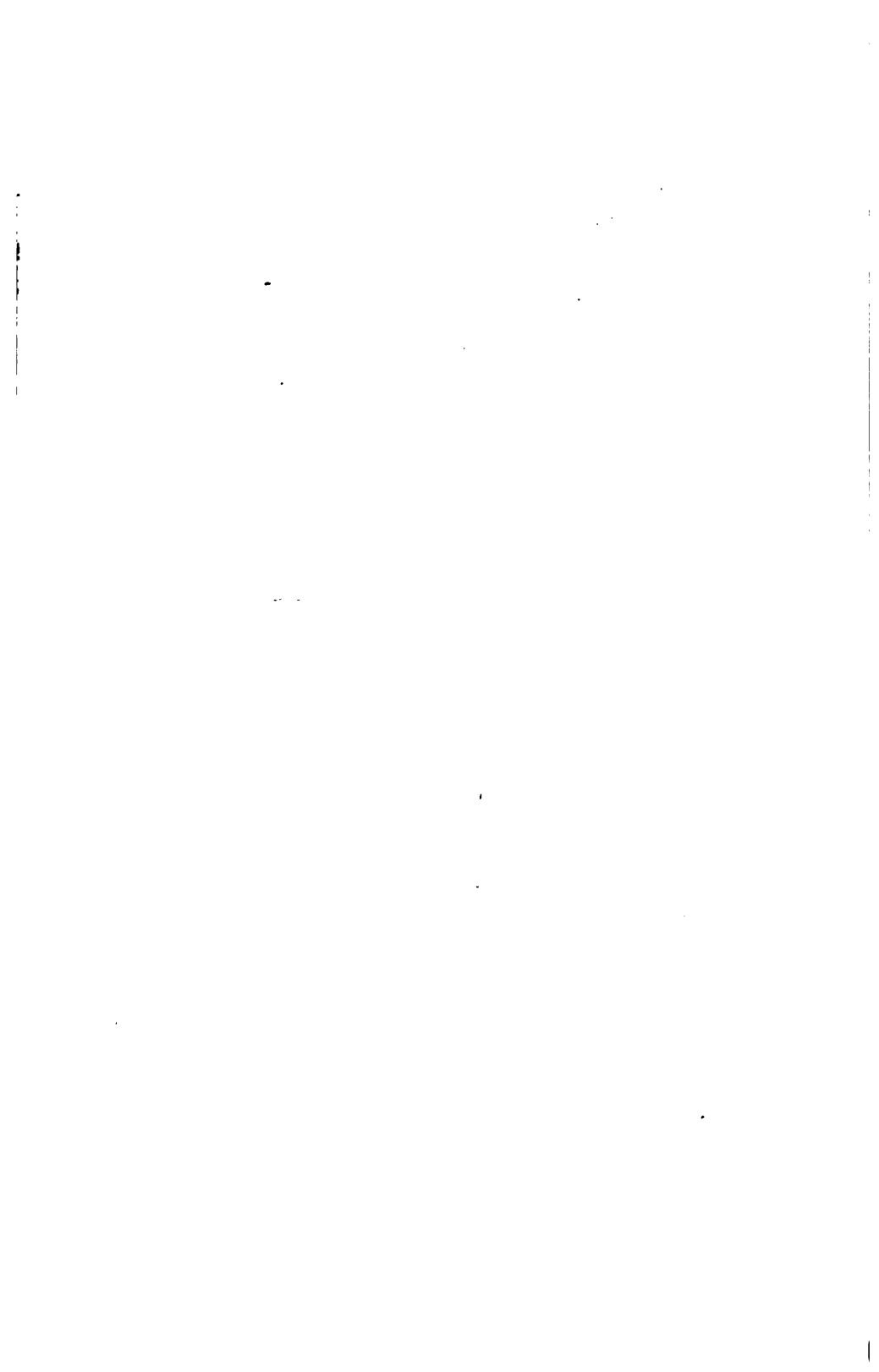
The sides in the present match were as follows:—Dumbog: Alex. Ferguson, smith (skip); Sir Roderick Duncan; William Maitland, farmer; Harry Maitland, writer; Rev. Andrew Somerville, minister; Allan Baps, baker. Knockdunder: Hugh Muckleworth, tailor (skip); Cuddie Stott, shepherd; Lord Cowdenknowes; Archie Neeps, grazier; Peter Parten, minister's man; Allan Gundy, grocer.

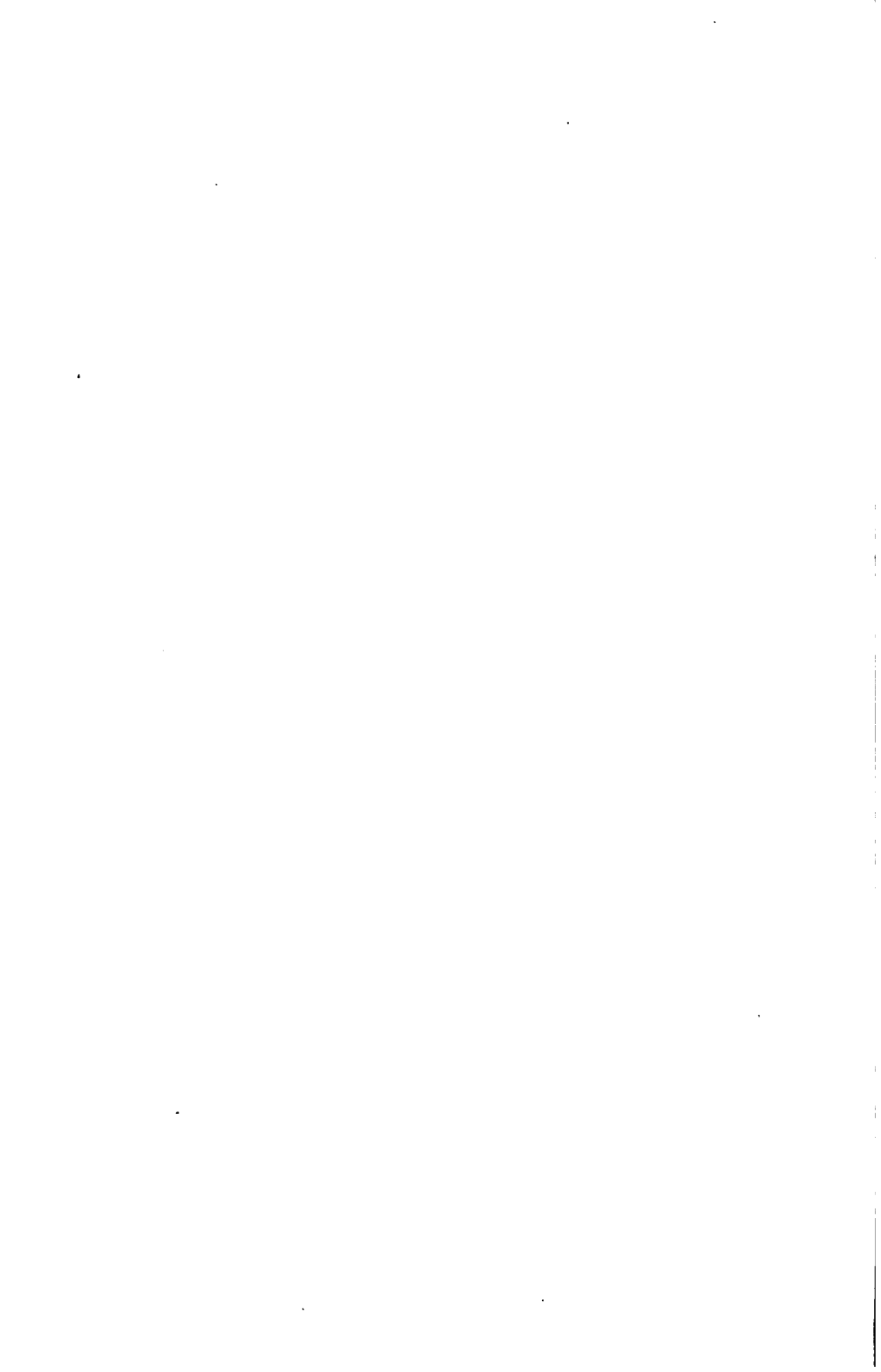
Before the play begins I have time to pick up a few hints as to its character and phraseology. Curling is a game at bowls, under such modifications as are necessitated by the substitution of ice for green sward, as the battle-field. Thus instead of balls, stones are used, which do not roll but slide. Imagine an ordinary Gouda cheese, flattened at the poles, bevelled at the sides, which slope away to a greater breadth at the bottom than at the top, and fitted on the upper surface with a handle into which the hand can be inserted so as to take a firm grip—and you will have a good idea of the shape of the 'channel stone.' Sometimes it is ornamented in an artistic and costly manner—the stone being of fine granite, beautifully polished and mounted with silver. Each player has a couple of these stones, and also a little besom, generally of broom, with which to sweep away dust, snow, and such fragments of ice in the path of the stone as might otherwise impede its

progress. The feet of the players must also be shod with crampons (*crampons*) of iron, in order to give them steadiness on the slippery stage. The rink is the ground within which the game is played, and usually embraces a space between thirty and forty feet long, at each end of which is placed a mark called the 'tee.' Round the tee is drawn a brugh or circle, out of which stones do not count, and all are lost which fall short of another line, called the hog-score. Taking their station at one tee, the players aim at the other, the object of each side being to get as many stones as possible near the tee. To accomplish this a great deal of skill and strategy has to be exercised. It is not enough to make a good shot but to guard it and to drive all rivals out of the way. As one of each side plays alternately, the state of the field is liable to constant alteration, and there are great fluctuations of fortune. The skip delivers his instructions to those on his side, as to what they should aim at, and is permitted to assist them by marking the spot with his broom.

Everything is now ready. All the players have arrived, the rink is cleared, and the eager competitors open fire with a round of trial shots, which the skips watch nervously in order to ascertain the merits or defects in each man's style of playing. Peter Parten, the minister's man at Knockdunder, is the only one who makes a pat-lid, that is, puts his stone close upon the mark, but he gets no glory by it, for having forgotten to put on his crampons, he overbalances himself in discharging the stone, and falls back with a great crash on the ice, where he lies stupefied for a second or two but is restored by a timely glass of whiskey, along with which Muckleworth, his leader, does not fail to administer an upbraiding lecture on an old text—the more haste the less speed. After this the game commences in earnest, and with about equal success on each side. The play is slow and deliberate. Over-caution produces several hogs, and the skips are calling for 'mair pouther, mair pouther!' Pat-lids







are made and unmade, guards are set and then sent spinning out of the ring. Now a stone which has been placed as an obstacle is, by a clever in-wick (cannon), made use of by the enemy to enter the brough, and again a player, in trying to remove a hostile shot, by a clumsy out-wick sends his own stone careening out of the scene of action. There are shots which it requires a great deal of sweeping to bring up to the proper point, and some, too strong, which cause the skip to cry 'Up hands' and forbid the assistance of the besoms. Our side is rather too sore about its last defeat and too anxious about winning to have that coolness and self-possession which is essential to success. Some of the shots have been rather wild, and the skip is almost beside himself with rage and anxiety. On the other side there is no very brilliant play, but none fall short of a certain average excellence. When the game is suspended for lunch, Knockdunder is eight a-head, and in a high state of exultation, our champions being rather chapfallen, but not disheartened. Such is the state of affairs, when, profiting by the interval of peace, I hasten off to Headrig to bring down the ladies for the close of the match.

On my return with my fair conveyance I find that the game is being conducted with a great deal more spirit than in the first stage. The stones rush buzzing and booming over the ice, in a more dashing, decided way. Out-broughts and not hogs are the danger now. The besoms, too, are being plied with tremendous energy, as though they would sweep a hole in the ice: and there is altogether more noise and excitement. Harry has been making some capital shots, and there is a hurrah for one of them, as we appear. Maggie flushes up when she knows who is the hero of the hour, but does not find much to say when he comes up, wiping his forehead, to receive her congratulations. He is

off in a minute again, for his broom is needed. Fortune has turned round, and Dumbog is now two a-head. Our men are all in first-rate cue. Knockdunder has been careless through over-confidence, and is now struggling desperately to recover the lead. The game goes on with increasing zest and fire. Fortune varies, but still Dumbog gains on its rival. At length we are within a few shots of victory. The laird has made a capital pat-lid, but his guard has been driven away, and he has had a narrow escape of being dislodged. The hostile stones, however, which surround him are a protection; but now it is necessary for Dumbog, if possible, to clear the ring of the foe and open a port or passage for its own shots. This duty falls to Harry's lot. 'Be sure and steady,' says the laird. 'Mind your ponthar, Harry,' cries his uncle. 'Tak' a nick at my cove!' shrieks Sandy. Then settling himself well on his crampets, clapping his left hand on his knee, and taking good aim Harry launches his stone. 'Scoop-scoop!' shout Sandy and his men, as the missile flies among the enemy, scattering them right and left. The fence is broken and the laird is left secure. One or two other shots are played, but Harry's has settled the game, rendering it easy for his comrades to do their part and hopeless for the other side to retrieve lost ground. That evening there was rejoicing in Dumbog; and after the indispensable feast of beef and greens, you may be sure Harry's health was drunk with all the honours. Sandy, the skip, was full of generous remorse for having ever doubted him; his uncle was as proud as if he had won the battle himself; and Maggie said little but looked a good deal.

That day, I fancy, Harry won more than the Bonspiel; and it will be a wonder if another generation of Maitlands be not brought up with a special enthusiasm for the 'roaring game.'

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

A Sketch.

I CONFESS I am of the number of those who exclaim with much fervour, 'Thank God we have a House of Lords!' Their proceedings, indeed, are too quiescent while for the greater part of the session they subsist in a sort of gorgeous indolence; but towards the close of each session the Upper House kindles into sudden and gorgeous efflorescence. I then know of no greater intellectual treat than to attend the great debates in that most august and imperial Chamber. The pitched battle of debate is generally limited to four nights, a space of time too limited to insure a fair hearing for all who desire to address their peers and the country; but there are no debates in the Lower House, no discussions in contemporary literature, that in point, weight, and purpose can surpass or even equal those nights of memorable debate in the Lords. But it would be inaccurate to gauge our Hereditary Chamber by the rare splendour of a crowded house or magnificent oratory. Legislative wisdom and the vulgarer business faculty are largely present there, and bills are sometimes passed with little scrutiny by the Commons which break down before the cautious, thorough, and impartial sifting of the Lords. If public business were more equably diffused over the two Houses there would be a larger amount of useful legislation for the country, and a remedy would be afforded for that plethoric absorption of all functions into itself which is more a danger than a strength to the House of Commons. At the present moment the political conditions presented by the House of Lords are very remarkable, replete with interest and importance. The temper and disposition of the two Houses are diametrically antagonistic. Great changes have recently occurred, and more are perhaps about to happen in the Upper House which may have important political results.

The House of Commons is distinctly Liberal and even Radical; there is a greater majority to follow Mr. Gladstone than has followed any Minister during the reign. The House of Lords is distinctly Conservative; the Tory peers have a compact and overpowering majority in their Chamber. In the face of such serious legislation as is now impending on such fundamental subjects as land and education there is a constant danger of collision. The problem for the majority of Tory lords will be nothing less than how to preserve their own entirety, to avoid a collision with democratic forces, and on the other hand to prevent themselves degenerating into the mere armorial bearings with which the Lower House may stamp and gild its edicts. The lamented death of Lord Derby and the change in the Tory leadership by the resignation of Lord Cairns are events that greatly change the *personnel* of the House, and may also be fraught with important political influences. Mr. Gladstone may turn any number of Liberal gentry into peers, but in the Upper House, according to pretty uniform experience, their Liberalism will most probably assume a mild type, and be not infrequently transformed into a very genuine Toryism.

Amid all the varying and conflicting feelings that attend the commencement of a new session we will make bold with all confidence to predicate what will be the first and the universal feeling among the assembling lords. It will be the thought of the absent, the chivalrous and noble form for ever gone, the lofty eloquent voice for ever silent. It will be with the keenest sensations of grief and regret that Edward Geoffrey, late Earl of Derby, will be missed. The peers had themselves almost seen the grand old man maintaining the conflict with grim hereditary disease, the outward man decaying, the lofty spirit unconquerable, the lofty thought imperishable. One

session, while a prey to violent disease, he had come down to the House to maintain his policy with every risk that he would meet with Chatham's fate on the floor of the House. Only last session they had heard his prophetic words, the very soul of dignified pathos, 'My lords, I am an old man: my official life is over, my political life is nearly over, and in the course of nature my natural life will soon be over.' And soon he was lying on a dying bed by which all England watched indeed, from the Queen herself to the poorest Lancashire operative, for whom he had worked and whom he had assisted, and which was watched with a passionate love and veneration by those who best knew his worth and goodness. Orator, statesman, poet, scholar, grandee on one side of his character; most tender to children, most conscientious, charitable, earnest, unaffectedly religious on the other side; in every way knight and gentleman, the character of Lord Derby loomed large and brilliant, the noblest decoration to our peerage. There was one narrow-minded, ignorant man who asserted in a 'Times' leader, the feeblest of all leaders written on a great occasion, that the late Lord Derby was not a great man; but it was the national feeling that 'a prince and a great man' had fallen. Although other men may have surpassed him in special directions there was in Lord Derby a constellation of great qualities which will make his name almost unique in our political annals. The writer of this paper has sometimes been asked by poor people to give them a line of recommendation to Lord Derby, and he would be sure to relieve them; one more proof, if such were needed, of a charity as unbounded as it was humble and unostentatious. Properly to appreciate the greatness of Lord Derby's mind, the political student should follow the course of his speeches and his policy through the many years of his career. Such a career has necessarily its failures and its errors, but its general effect is thoroughly to establish the impression of Lord

Derby's goodness and greatness. We scarcely know of anything so instructive or so spirit-stirring as to read those debates in the House of Commons in which, as Mr. Stanley, he first achieved his great oratorical triumphs, when the feelings of the reader cannot fail to become excited with that same intense enthusiasm which he excited in his auditory. The 'Times' reporter is then hardly able to find terms adequately to express the marvellous effect produced by that ringing, trenchant eloquence. We forgive to youth that scorpion scorn, but as we progress from point to point in his career we recognize clearly how we have the model life of an English peer and statesman, and the valorous honour and intellectual genius are stamped even on his errors. Such a career is one of the most precious inheritances of our country. Such a memory will be retained in the deepest love and honour while the most precious traditions of our England endure. Achilles sleeps, but he is not forgotten. In the words of old Homer, with whom his own nature had so much affinity—

Ευθείς, ἅλα' οὐ σείο ληλασμένοι ἔσμεν, Ἀχιλλεύ.

It was one of the great happinesses of Lord Derby's life that he has left behind him a son who is a worthy inheritor of his name and honours. In statesmanship he who was so lately Lord Stanley—that well-remembered title dormant now—is probably not one whit behind his sire. In all practical work, in insight into the wants and character of our age, in administrative ability, he is probably superior. In the keen sense of honour, in intellectual power, in the weightiness of speech, though not in the lightning of eloquence, he upholds the old Stanley traditions. We believe that never were father and son, each to each, so loving and beloved. Lord Stanley's advent to the Upper House is a most pregnant event in the history of the House of Lords. His wide sympathies, his intellectual tastes, even his very temper and temperament, make, however, a wide divergence between him and a considerable

section of his party. Those questions are now cleared away in which his sympathies rather lay with the party of progress than with the Constitutional party. On the questions that will prominently emerge in the next and future sessions his mental attitude will probably be more markedly with the Tories than it has heretofore been, and it is not unlikely that he will travel in that same groove which his father and Edmund Burke trod before him. It is remarkable that the Conservatives, who have now hardly any adequate supporter for Mr. Disraeli in the House of Commons, should have a positive embarrassment about their possible leader in the House of Lords. It seems most probable that the nobleman who has succeeded Lord Derby in the most splendid of his honours, that of Chancellor of the University of Oxford, will also succeed him in the onerous vanguard as Leader of the House of Lords.

The Marquis of Salisbury has succeeded, while yet young, to the full maturity of honours, to the great office held successively by the Duke of Wellington and the Earl of Derby. That magnificent career which has of late years been crowded with such remarkable successes was noted at the onset by a few comparative or superlative failures. Lord Robert Cecil was to have attained great academical honours, but the honours were not obtained. He was to have achieved great literary fame, but the fame did not come at once. He was descended from an illustrious stock and from an opulent house, but it seemed that he was destined for the narrow fortune of a younger brother. Yet the successes came. It is no secret that both in the 'Quarterly Review' and the 'Saturday Review' Lord Robert exhibited remarkable proofs of literary ability such as might have qualified him for a place in any future edition of 'Royal and Noble Authors.' But he was destined to exhibit, in a practical way, the very same great abilities which he had been exhibiting in a literary and scientific mode. It is not given to every man to express himself

calmly upon paper in a cynical, cool, incisive, trenchant way, and to exhibit precisely the same qualities before a crowded auditory. But this was exactly what Lord Robert Cecil did. He became known in the House of Commons as one of the most acute and damaging of debaters. Lord Robert was indeed exceedingly restive in his nominal allegiance to Mr. Disraeli, and it became a question then, as it is a question now, how far he will be able to act cordially with the last Tory Premier. In England character goes at least as far as ability in forming the estimate in which the character of public men is held. It was given to Lord Robert that he should be able to afford singular proofs of adherence to political principle and to manly independence. He satisfied himself by long calculation that the Conservative Reform Bill was extending the franchise in a way inconsistent with the principles of the party, and he forthwith dropped a letter into the penny post, informing the Premier that he was unable to continue a member of his Government. It was well known at the time that the emoluments of office were then very far from being below his consideration; that he was making a great reputation as an administrator; and that by this step he was sentencing himself to political isolation and possibly to social ostracism. The step was taken, with an utter disregard to consequences, on the issue of principle. From that time his public character has been exalted in public estimation to a sort of moral pinnacle. The sudden death of his blind brother and his father's decease have made him a great territorial magnate. In the House of Lords he immediately achieved even a higher position than he held in the House of Commons. To the force and acuteness of his mind there is added a moral intrepidity which infinitely heightens the intellectual value of his speeches. Lord Salisbury is one of the most effective of speakers. Once heard he is never forgotten; you long to hear him again, and greet his rising with pleasure. There is an

extreme democratic school to whom he is as hateful as ever was Stratford to the leaders of the Long Parliament, inasmuch as he is the highest exponent of a consistent, logical, intellectual Toryism; but for all that perhaps the time is not very remote when Lord Salisbury may be Premier.

The fact that Lord Cairns, after the leadership of a single session, has resigned his position in the House and towards his party, will give in some respect a changed aspect to the Upper Chamber. There will be deep and general regret, that the same cause which led to the abdication of Lord Derby has, in its turn, occasioned the abdication of Lord Cairns. Singularly rapid, brilliant, and imposing has been the elevation of this great man. He was the learned and adroit equity advocate who proved about the most formidable of legal competitors to such men as Bethell and Palmer. In the House of Commons he attained a parliamentary reputation which no great lawyer, whether of the Chancery or Common Law Bar has ever attained—not Bethell, nor Palmer, nor Cockburn, nor Coleridge. The union of law and statesmanship is of a very rare and difficult kind. Men wondered whether there was really ever such a union in the case of Hugh Macalmont Cairns. Men who knew him in the courts acknowledged that he was one of the most learned, profound, and skilful of advocates, but could not at all understand that he could be a statesman of the very first order of eloquence, comprehensiveness, and ability. Those who heard him conclude a long debate with hour after hour of lucid, forcible, argumentative speech, could hardly understand how a man, apparently so fit for the highest departments of policy and administration, could so adequately deal with all the petty and cumbrous details of ordinary litigation. Of the legal career of this great man we shall not permit ourselves to speak. One little anecdote we may venture to give, which has come within our own personal knowledge, and, slight as it is, affords an index to a noble and generous cha-

racter. We knew of a case submitted to him, when at the bar, for an opinion, in which, unhappily, the law was one way and justice another. If this seems too strong an expression, we may say that the legal bearing of the case involved great hardships on an individual. Sir Hugh's opinion was clearly adverse to his client, but, as a mark of his sympathy, he begged to be allowed to return his fees. Of his senatorial career as contrasted with his career at the bar it is competent for any of us to form an opinion. There have been great lawyers who have been silent in the house, or, at least, utterly unimportant. There are some, of whom the present Lord Chief Justice of England is the most eminent example, who have succeeded to admiration in the occasional set speeches, but have evidenced nothing of that political talent which can both subserve a party and also promote imperial interests. Cairns had a twofold vocation, that of law and that of statesmanship, but the greatest of these is for statesmanship. But he did double work, and he did it admirably, until the two lines of life merged together on his elevation to the peerage and office of High Chancellor at an early age almost unparalleled in the history of the Great Seal.

But it is not given to every man to bear such Atlas labours on his shoulders, to compress into a lifetime an amount of intellectual activity so far transcending that of most statesmen and lawyers. As Attorney-General, Sir Hugh's legal gains could have been enormous, but his immense labours were beginning to tell on his powerful frame, and he relinquished his mixed legal and political life for the comparative repose of the Lord Justiceship. Almost the solitary political change made by Mr. Disraeli, when he became Premier, was to displace Lord Chelmsford from the Chancellorship and confer that great dignity on Lord Cairns. Lord Chelmsford is the most amiable, pleasant, and gentlemanly of law lords. He could at times also give ugly slashes, as he showed in the

duello between himself and Lord Westbury. But something very different to this was required by the grave impending legislation. The elegant cut-and-thrust swordsmanship of a Chelmsford, that ineffably-irritating hissing contempt of a Westbury, were like old-world artillery compared with the broad, massive, substantial ordnance of Lord Cairns. Perhaps it is not in a lawyer's nature to refuse the highest prize in his profession; and his chivalrous loyalty to his party would have forbade him to decline any post where he might best serve his cause and country. But the post of honour was also the post of danger. Whispers prevailed that the Chancellor's health was hardly equal to his mighty mental energies. I was sorry to find him running down to Torquay for a brief respite from his parliamentary duties. Those who are accustomed to diagnose the state of health from the quality of voice noticed with regret in the great orator a certain reediness of speech, the necessity of frequently tasting water, and an occasional failure in the latter syllables of his sentences. Lord Cairns' infirm health authorizes the only genuine criticism that we have heard passed on his speeches. He evidently gathers up his energies by a strong physical effort for a set oration. His power and earnestness, his commanding presence and his ringing, impressive, and at times even thrilling tones produced some of the best effects of eloquence; but he is not eloquent; as we used to call Lord Derby eloquent and Mr. Gladstone is eloquent. Lord Derby entered the parliamentary fray with a genuine joy; he loved 'to drink delight of battle with his peers'; his the proud *elan*, the fiery onset, the rapt oration. Lord Cairns in the Upper House hardly manifested this. He wound himself up, obviously and laboriously, for a mighty effort, that had infinite force, yet infinitely little fire. It was the very triumph of spirit over matter, but still it was possible to detect flagging corporeal energies. One felt that to lead the majority of the peerage of England required greater

spirits and more elasticity—comparatively trivial gifts in comparison with the greater gifts possessed, but the absence of which infinitely mars and maims. For a parliamentary leader, even in the Opposition and even in the House of Lords, there is a multiplicity of engagements and anxieties; and Lord Cairns is happily able to combine justice to himself with justice to his party in retiring from that position of leadership in which he has won golden opinions and warm affections such as are rarely excited by any public man. The chief misfortune of Lord Cairns is that he has not been a great territorial magnate like most peers; his chief fault and almost the only direction in which the advocate's bias indicates itself, is that in controversy he sometimes takes an undue advantage, and is not always the fairest of opponents.

Lord Hatherley, the Chancellor, has conciliated in many quarters respect and regard. It is true that in his speeches he sometimes sermonizes, and in his sermonizing he sometimes twaddles; and as a judge he had rather a gift of wrapping up the weightiest judgments in the obscurest language, which was hardly the happiest knack for the official Speaker of the House of Lords. But the Lord Chancellor's speeches, though disfigured at times by occasional warmth, have been always earnest and gentlemanly. Though a lawyer, he is not even as other lawyers are. He is a wealthy man apart from his profession, having, among other things, derived much property from the old miser, Jemmy Wood, of the Westgate Street, Gloucester. He likes the gospel better than he likes the law. He never fails to attend early morning service in Westminster Abbey, or to take a boys' class in the Sunday-school, just as Sir Roundell Palmer does. Whenever he goes to a City dinner, with an amiable garrulity he recounts the old connection which the old Devonshire man, Sir Matthew Wood, had with the City, and fights over again the story of his career, how he has attained the dignity of which he had never an expectation.

He is greatly liked as a Chancellor, affording thereby as great a contrast as may be to that cashiered Liberal Chancellor, Lord Westbury. This learned lord now leaves his luxurious Italian retreat, where he has a prospect like that from Richmond Hill, to earn the five thousand a year retiring pension. He is one of the greatest of our lawyers, and has put the penny press under deep obligation to him by the institution of the Divorce Court. But we must go back to the time of Lord Maccolesfield before we can find anything of a parallel to the circumstances of his fall. In his mincing, sarcastic tones there used to be something peculiarly vitriolic, especially in those days when he spoke with the lips of power. He would then use scornful language, such as, to use an expression of Baron Alderson, Lord Salisbury's father-in-law, God Almighty would not use to a black-beetle. On one occasion, when a peer had given the 'impression on his mind,' Lord Westbury, in referring to him, said, 'As to what the noble lord has been pleased to call his mind—' and thereby pretty well occasioned what reporters call 'a scene.' Lord Derby arose and said that in that House their lordships were not accustomed to such language. It does not so much matter now when or how Lord Westbury speaks. The Whigs, although the general majority of the Lords is dead against them, have generally resolved to have at least a majority of law lords. Lord Romilly has proved himself such a true friend to literature, by throwing open the archives of the Rolls, that we shall attempt no unfavourable criticism on him, either as a judge or as a speaker. Lord Penzance is so new to his peerage that it would be premature to criticise the *quondam* Sir James Wilde. When we lost Sir Crosswell Crosswell it was supposed that the loss was quite irreparable; but Sir James Wilde soon demonstrated that, in a large experience and a peculiar order of mind, he was quite able to carry on Sir Crosswell's work. We look upon him with admiration as we think of his accumulated stores of knowledge re-

specting the varieties of feminine character, and what a popular book he would write if he were to give the world a volume of his most striking incidents and his most original reflections. Lord Penzance is well known for his contempt of the mere chicanery and technicalities of law, as was the late Mr. Justice Hayes; and if any large measure of law reform should be ever brought forward, he will have an opportunity of stamping his name on an improved system of our jurisprudence.

But it is time that we should look at the illustrious Whig leader of the House, Lord Granville. He wears the velvet glove, but there is steel beneath. He is the best conceivable leader for Government in the Lords. It must be rather depressing for him to feel that the general sense of the House is pretty uniformly against him; but it must be an endless source of satisfaction to him to contemplate the thought of that 'tyrant majority' in the neighbouring room. 'Granville the polite,' might be a phrase expressly coined for the noble lord, he is so deferential and courteous, with such pleasant manners, such vast knowledge of the world, such urbanity and desire to be urbane. There is perhaps something almost too honied and polite—complaisance carried to an extreme point—about Lord Granville, that gives an impression rather unfavourable to the notion of much intellectual strength. Lord Granville certainly does not belong to the first order of mind; and the idea could never be carried out—which we can well understand to be a favourite with such Whigs as think Mr. Gladstone too democratic—that he should be the Liberal Premier. But Earl Granville has formed for himself a vast body of political opinions and experiences; but for an English statesman he is perhaps rather too cosmopolitan in his notions, and his point of view a little too exclusively that of the 'educated foreigner,' who seems to have been developed from Macaulay's 'intelligent schoolboy.'

We now turn to that truly memorable and historical Whig, Earl Russell, whose present political status

contrasts strongly with that recent greatness when he led the House, and was, for the third time, Premier. He affords a melancholy instance of the fragility of human greatness. Very few and quaint are the peers that will follow Lord Russell, for any peculiar Russell notion, into the division lobby. His personal following has probably been much less than ordinarily attaches itself to a man who has been Premier. He has not, indeed, the Ishmaelish isolation of Lord Grey, whose party has never extended beyond the solitary unit of his own individuality. Lord Russell is now the most 'historical statesman' we have; but there has always been something essentially unsound about his position. It is the vulgarst popular delusion to suppose that to him, in any special sense, is to be assigned that silent revolution of the Reform Act of 1832. He was merely the mouth-piece of his party, on the occasion of asking leave to bring in the Bill, and was not even a member of the Cabinet. There has always been an element of weakness and clap-trap about Lord John which renders an adjudication on his character extremely difficult. He is a man concerning whom men often manifest an extreme fertility in the use of abusive terms. He is not very acceptable to his own friends, and nothing at all in that way to his enemies. He has been obviously convicted of infinite presumption, of courting popularity, of immense blunders, of ungenerosity towards his own friends; yet Mr. Gladstone doubtless said the truth when he said that Lord Russell's breast might very well be covered with a mass of medals for the great achievements he had wrought. The Earl once declared that he never knew what a pecuniary obligation was until he became Prime Minister; a sentence that speaks volumes for Earl Russell and for British statesmen.

Let us now take a glance at that right reverend bench of bishops. Last session they quite bore away the honours of debate. If ever a time should come when bishops would lose their seats in the House of Lords, if they were allowed to be

eligible for election, some of them would be sure to secure seats. The presence of that bench in the House of Lords is, after all, very limited compensation for the utter exclusion of the clergy from Parliament. It is not easy to see what the State gains by this utter elimination of an order at least as learned, conscientious, and enlightened as any other. It is rather a hardship that dissenting ministers should be allowed a seat in the House of Commons—Mr. Miall and Mr. Richards (Merthyr Tydfil) are examples—while such a distinction is debarred to those who have received episcopal ordination. Among the prelates there are as skilful debaters and eloquent orators as any in the House. The Archbishop of Canterbury was always clear, able, and effective as a debater. All must most deeply regret that his future appearances in the House should be so extremely problematical. A most kindhearted man is the Archbishop, singularly fair and moderate, with a strong dash of pleasant humour, which was hardly sufficiently known and appreciated—theologically and politically a many-sided man, holding very firmly a Presbyterian groundwork of simple truth, but beyond that tolerant and receptive of all ideas. He must have had great abilities besides great good fortune, in working himself up from a red-cloaked student in Glasgow college to the marble chair of St. Augustine. The Archbishop's lamented illness will cause an element in that remarkable change of the *personnel* of the House of Lords which next session will witness. His most reverend brother of Ebor., who looks every inch an archbishop, is not a skilful debater; but he can make a good set speech, and there is a great deal of strong thought in them—an intellectual and literary power very unusual in speeches. We need not discuss the Irish archbishops, save for Bishop Alexander, whose absence will hardly cause any diminution in the debating power of the House.

Having duly observed the order of precedence, we may discuss the other prelates. Up to last session it would have been promptly said that

Bishop Wilberforce—it is so strange to have to drop the familiar phrase ‘the Bishop of Oxford’—was, *par excellence*, the best speaker among the bishops, and not surpassed anywhere in the House. But the great episcopal speech last session was that of Dr. Magee, the Bishop of Peterborough. We never heard in our lives a speech of more wonderful eloquence. But there is an adroitness, suppleness, and subtlety about Bishop Wilberforce which render him a consummate master in all the craft of parliamentary debate. Dr. Magee is a man of simpler and more earnest mind, and on great occasions he may be trusted to make orations of a thrilling power which cannot be surpassed even by the highest flights in the speeches of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright. Such great occasions, however, come but rarely; and in all ordinary debating the matchless versatility, wit, and ease of Bishop Wilberforce will bear away the palm, as has always been the case. This great versatility of the bishop’s must at times be a matter of sincerest regret to his greatest admirers. His speech on the Irish Church Bill, in 1868, was admirable, and so also was his speech on the same subject in 1869. But how the same man could have made both speeches, and how both speeches are to be reconciled, will, we imagine, be a matter of the deepest interest. It is the fashion in the House of Lords always to pit the Duke of Argyll against the Bishop of Winchester. The two men are almost the moral and intellectual antipodes of each other. The bishop is a singularly complex character; he combines the cooings of innumerable doves with the sagacity of innumerable serpents. The duke is a man of simple, straightforward mental habits. The bishop likes a gorgeous ecclesiasticism, with a not unpleasant dash of ritualism; over all the duke’s speeches writ large is the word Presbyterian. The bishop is gorgeous, rhetorical, emotional; the duke is severe, logical, scientific. There are hardly any two speakers in the House between whom there exists such a thorough and innate antagonism as between

his grace of Argyll and the ‘sapona-ceous’ one. Of course the reader has heard the bishop’s reputed explanation of the ‘soapy’ term—that his hands are always in hot water and always get clean. By-the-way, what a change it is for the clergy of the Winchester diocese, from their extremely Low Church bishop, Dr. Sumner, with his uniform silken suavity and mild horticultural tastes, to the fiery energies of the new lord of Winchester House!

Much might be said of the other prelates, and it might be pointed out how many of them have achieved their positions by sheer stress of ability and force of character. Dr. Magee was for years a poor curate on his eighty pounds a year, and had not even the advantage, such as it is, of a training at an English university. The Bishop of St. David’s is simply a prodigy; he commenced his authorship at the age of nine years, and his wisdom and learning seem to have been accumulating at an accelerating ratio ever since. His argument against the Irish bishops was thought a very conclusive one; but it was quite as conclusive against Welsh bishops. In cutting off other people’s legs he cut off his own as well. There are bishops who speak so well out of the House that it becomes a matter of deep regret that they never speak in it. There were also some promising debaters who have disappeared as Irish prelates. But Dr. Magee is the oratorical flower and outcome of episcopal oratory. His, too, is that growing mind which, in orderly progression, has powerfully expanded and has not reached its acmé yet. Dr. Temple will be a new ‘force’ on the episcopal bench.

It is to be feared that neither the Commons nor the country reap the full benefit that might be derived from the House of Lords. It is true, as Mr. Gladstone urged, that they do not come fresh from a contact with the country; but on this account they enjoy a freedom from mists and storms, that are local and temporary, an immunity that is consonant with those highest parliamentary privileges of the right of protest and the possession of appellate ju-

risdiction. We may here inquire why the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords should not be expanded in its exercise. When we see Lord Dufferin sitting on the bench with a Lord Justice, and Lord Salisbury associated with Lord Cairns in one of the heaviest of arbitration cases, we begin to ask whether lawyers are absolutely all-in-all in settling complex cases, and whether some addition might not be profitably made from the body of the House to the few law lords in whom the appellate jurisdiction is virtually vested. Despite the storms that occasionally stir even the serene atmosphere of the House of Lords, there is still a calmness and elevation of tone, a breadth and philosophy in discussion, which give the debates in the Lords a higher moral and intellectual character than ordinarily belongs to the other Chamber. It is to be regretted that the sittings are comparatively infrequent, and also that so many of the younger peers are so chary of their attendance; but if bills were sent up earlier from the Commons, as they themselves desire, much more might be done. Considerable legislative fodder will be required to feed men of such keen business habits as Lord Derby and Lord Salisbury.

Nothing more notes the high-bred courtesy of the lords than a certain ease and freedom in the debates. A nobleman never gets uncomfortable in his speech, though he may stam-

mer in his utterance, and cannot find his notes, and the papers he wants cannot be found among those which he has in his hands. He knows that he is among gentlemen who will give him trust and kindness to any extent. If he is ever so bad a speaker, he has made up his mind to stammer through with it—he is heard with respect and attention. The Duke of Devonshire is by many degrees the worst speaker we have ever heard; but as a large Irish proprietor, as a man of immense mind and knowledge, as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, he was listened to with deep interest, and his speech—thanks to the reporters—read with a fluency which never in the least degree belonged to it. The ordinary peer is not a good speaker, and the ordinary sittings of the House of Lords are not interesting sittings; but on a great night, when the House is full, when the faithful Commons cluster round the throne, when the strangers' gallery is thronged, and all around the other three sides are the most gorgeous of England's great dames, and high debate proceeds until the morning lights gleam through the painted glass, we feel conscious that the world has no more imposing sight to show, and that we have almost in this imposing spectacle, a very representation of the spirit of English history.

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

LONG ENGAGEMENTS.

IF you should happen to discuss with elderly and experienced ladies the subject of Long Engagements, you will find that they will shake their heads steadily and at once pronounce an unequivocal verdict of disapprobation. Like the celebrated colonial judge, they are perhaps not so happy in their argumentation as in their decision, but

they fall back upon their verdict as characterised by the most impregnable wisdom. If you come to investigate their reasons, they candidly avow themselves empirics; their opinion is merely a generalisation of limited individual experiences. It will be found, however, that the British mother's reasons generally resolve themselves into two; first,

they say that if an engagement is indefinitely prolonged the daughter's health is apt to suffer very greatly; and next, they say that the long engagement has an inherent tendency to disintegration—that it is apt to resolve and come to nothing. The subject is a matter of considerable practical importance, and may repay an attempt at elucidation.

Of course extreme instances are to be avoided. But these instances should be avoided both on the one side or on the other. Sometimes a very brief is worse than a very long engagement. Most people have heard in their time some queer stories of very short engagements. I remember the case of a gentleman who was going out as a missionary. I do not think that he was going *à fresco* among the savages, but rather, I should think, to some district where Europeans can live very comfortably despite the surrounding prevalent heathenism. I believe that it is an understood principle, for reasons easily intelligible, that a missionary is best married. This gentleman had neglected, however, to the very last, to provide himself with such a necessary adjunct to his labours. He was taking tea with a nice family, and he announced that he had to depart for the East the day after the morrow, and also the unsatisfactory state of his personal arrangements. A young lady who was present rather liked him as an individual, and greatly sympathised with him as a missionary. The result, which may be stated in an abridged form, simply was that the young lady who saw him one day married him the next and sailed away with him to India on the third. We do not wish to bode ill for this interesting young couple, but we are sure that a terrific paper might be written on hasty marriages.

Now let me give a case in point on the other side of the question. Several long engagements of a truly venerable character have come to my knowledge. There was a man in Australia who was engaged to a lady in England for twenty years. The lady pleaded that she could not leave her mother. I wonder, by the way, whether she had ever asked her

mother. I am not sure that young ladies always fully understand their mothers on these points. The gentleman allowed the plea, and a languid, semi-Platonic correspondence went on. One fine morning the gentleman was surprised by a letter from his ancient friend, informing him that her mother was now departed this life and that she was ready to come out and marry him. This was rather a serious demand to make upon a middle-aged man while cracking his egg at breakfast. But he considered that he had given his acceptance, and did not fail to honour the draft in the most business-like way.

Here is another case of a *quasi* long-engagement character. A clergyman was walking in a beautiful park to note a famous castle and the surrounding landscape. At a sudden turn of a walk he met a lady, whose face, though somewhat changed by time, he remembered well. It was that of a lady to whom the parson had been engaged twenty years before. They had loved each other greatly then, but, according to their notions of living, there did not appear the most forlorn chance of a union. Under these circumstances the lovers agreed that they would postpone matters indefinitely, and that each should be considered at liberty. The lady went out to India as a speculation and dropped into a good thing. The gentleman stuck with pertinacity to his curacy, and remained on the same spot for the whole twenty years. Then, after such a long parting, they at last met again, in this accidental way, in the great 'show' park. She was a widow, with an only child, rich, and was handsome still. Walking slowly beneath the swinging chestnut boughs, they discussed old friends, old times. And then the parson said that he proposed to forget those past twenty years, to erase them, as if they had never been, and to revert once more to the old days of their engagement. And the lady said, in mild phrases meaning much, that she had no objection. And the long engagement revived in the form of a very short one.

It may be said that we are look-

ing upon the subject in an empiric way, citing opposite instances and not laying down a principle. It would be easy to make a wide-sweeping generalisation—if we could only see our way to it. But the subject must be taken in cases, and the cases must be decided on their merits. It is a subject for that noble science of casuistry, which, once diligently pursued both by Romanist and Puritan, seems now relegated into the region of ethical curiosities. The only general consent on the subject is that adopted by mothers, who look upon long engagements with an ill-disguised aversion; and when they take you into their confidence and tell you how vexed and anxious they are about their nice girls, and enlarge on that dispiriting hopelessness, which is a kind of shadow to long engagements, it is difficult not to sympathise with their troubles and be persuaded by their rhetoric. A great deal of satire is often lavished upon worldly mothers. But in this so-called worldliness good mothers are often unworldly and unselfish. They only want to know for certain what is really for the true good of their girls, and they will be sure to do it.

There is generally a considerable amount of poetic interest about a young engaged pair. But in a long engagement they frequently discount their raptures at a long date and with a heavy sacrifice. Among friends and in the family the smile of interest at the outset is exchanged for the smile of pity in the issue. A girl feels irritated and indignant when she knows that she is pated. There is often some amount of affectation about an engaged girl, which is sometimes amusing, and sometimes absurd. She is apt to retire, like a stricken deer, to some lonely glade in the drawing-room, where she considers general society as mere intrusion, and all men, except the 'object,' as mere nonentities. She will exemplify that selfishness which in nine cases out of ten belongs to love. Her own home will have for her a subordinate and decreasing interest. She will lose the fresh love of nature and the keenness of her zest for study. Her mind will be

obviously unsettled. Her girlhood seems vanished, and a premature womanhood sets in. If there is any constitutional weakness in her system now is the time to look out for its manifestation. You will detect a cough, a hectic flush, a weakness in the back, what Mr. Robertson in his 'School' calls 'a floating, or a fainting, or a sinking, or a swimming.' Perhaps a marriage is patched up, when the young people are not a whit better prepared to marry than they were years ago, and perhaps with a disturbing feeling that some of the best years of life have been unwisely spent in a long delay that has nothing to show for itself.

There is no doubt but a wise mother will seek to take a daughter from such an eminently unsatisfactory condition of affairs. She is not to be thought hard and worldly, if, with a prescient eye, she detects possible entanglements and strategically guards against them. She has a well-rounded aversion and objection to the impecunious detrimental. If the mischief is really done, we advise her to make the best of things. We are by no means certain, even if we put ourselves into a very hard and worldly attitude, that the rough-and-ready method of getting rid of an injudicious engagement by the simple process of breaking it off is really the best. The principle is that if girls cannot form long engagements without upsetting themselves in this sort of way, so far as possible they ought to be kept from forming long engagements. The demurrer will be that the young lady who bears this set of circumstances so ill must be a pale, colourless, thin, unsubstantial character. The rejoinder is, that young ladies, although we will not apply to them such uncivil adjectives, do, as a rule, bear ill the trial of long engagements. Perhaps they would also bear ill the trials of widowhood and motherhood, especially in a chronic state of impecuniosity. It may be allowed, also, that there are some bright elastic natures on whom a long engagement has a positively invigorating effect. The body of exceptions which they furnish indicates the extreme difficulty of laying down any general law on the subject.

If we might venture to frame a generalization of any sort, we should say that the long engagement, which has such an unsettling effect on the lady, has frequently a settling effect on the man. It makes and keeps him simple, and steady, and earnest. If the lover is worth having, the lover, one would almost think, would be worth waiting for. The mother of course says that the long engagement affords such a hazard that it will be broken off, and her daughter, after wasting her best years and best feelings, may be jilted. Perhaps, however, it is an inaccurate use of language to say that what is earliest is best. The argument merely cuts in a different way also, that it may often save a girl from an unworthy marriage. There is certainly a constant possibility of a break off, when the betrothal is not, as in Germany, a solemn ceremony of the highest publicity.

There are certain people to whom an engagement of marriage would be altogether forbidden if some sanction were not given to the long engagement. The curate in the church, the lieutenant in the army, the clerk in the bank, such amiable, domestic, well-educated, well-mannered young people would make such satisfactory husbands, if only that vulgar element of filthy lucre existed in sufficient force. Strange that the mineral substances of gold and silver should make such a difference to immortal souls! But they, too, are God's creatures as well as those who can afford to keep a gig. They may say that they fall in love and become engaged, not because they keep a banking account, but on the simple ultimate ground that they are human beings. We think that it would be difficult to resist this plea as a matter of legitimate argument. But a man cannot be both hare and harrier. He cannot take broad human ground in one direction and narrow conventional ground in another direction. He should not make an engagement on the plea that he is a man, and then make the engagement indefinitely long on the plea that he is the creature of ci-

vilization. If he makes the kind of engagement which is long, he should resolve that it shall not be prolonged beyond a certain date. Although the ladies, with their graceful impetuosity, say that six months is quite long enough, yet we think that the Roman law was probably quite fair in permitting a term of two years. After that, let the pair, if the pair have made up their minds, that, for them, marriage is the supreme earthly good, get married at any risk. Let them emigrate, keep a school, live in an attic, work with their hands, go without sugar and butter, let the lady make the bed and lay the tablecloth, and the gentleman answer the bell and black his own boots. Having made their log-house in the backwoods of social life in their youth, they will probably shake down into some good thing before they have finished. But if they are people who fear Mrs. Grundy, and who are nothing if they are not genteel, they are hardly entitled to the dangerous luxury of a long engagement.

The chief terrors that for the parent birds surround a long engagement arises from the wretchedly-mistaken views of marriage that prevail among the majority of women. Any one, we think, who attempts to take a wide and impartial view of life would find it extremely difficult to give a clear, unswerving note in favour either of marriage or celibacy. When the chances are so evenly balanced we cannot imagine why there should be such morbid anxiety on either side. We often think that a woman of liberal, refined tastes, fond of life, of society, of intellectual pursuits, makes a disastrous exchange when she surrounds herself with multitudinous cares of life. Even if we take the extreme case of those who must do something for their own livelihood if they do not marry, there are still undoubtedly discoverable equivalents or consolation. Mothers and daughters, for the most part, attach an exaggerated importance to marriage. They regard it as an end-in-itself instead of being, as it really is, a means to

an end. Marriage is not life, but the accident of life. Whether married or unmarried, whether engaged or not engaged, the active or the spiritual side of religion, intellectual pursuits, social and family claims, the ties of friendship and relationship, the elevation and development of one's nature, will make up the main substance of a wise and good woman's life. Marriage, *per se*, ought not to be necessary for usefulness or happiness, and certainly could not alone confer them. When these beneficent energies are present either state may be taken as God may send, and even a long engagement may be cheerfully borne, without the risk either of ridicule or compassion.

DR. LEE OF EDINBURGH.*

Mr. Story, of Roseneath, who before now has written a remarkable and successful work in biography, has given us two portly volumes respecting Dr. Lee, for many years one of the leading characters of Edinburgh, and known far and wide beyond Edinburgh limits. We think that some sort of biography was due to Dr. Lee, but the present work has absurdly-exaggerated dimensions, and might very conveniently have been cut down to about one-fifth of its bloated proportions. Mr. Story would have done well if he had imitated the succinctness of the graceful and earnest preface affixed to his work by that charming writer Mrs. Oliphant. Dr. Lee was a fine, manly, vigorous character, utterly free from a kind of religionism that frequently degenerates into cant, straightforward and consistent. In that great quarrel which he had with the General Assembly our sympathies are warmly with him. He wanted to use a Liturgy, and he used it. Nothing can be more satisfactory than the points of contact and unity that are unceasingly acknowledged between the Episcopalian and the Presbyterian

churches. The organ, the painted glass, the shortened manuscript sermon, the liturgical prayers which would have made the Covenanters 'gasped and stare' sufficiently indicate that it is impossible that good men, when fashion and stumbling-blocks are removed, should not approximate nearer and nearer to each other. We hold that Dr. Lee was quite right to insist on having a Liturgy for Greyfriars church. But there was some force in the objection of the Assembly to the use of a printed Liturgy for the congregation, as being revolutionary to the constitution of the Scottish Kirk. It was never known that a single individual composed and authorized a liturgy for a Church; even Baxter signally failed. Dr. Lee pressed his point too far and too persistently. He had a vast parish to work, but he seemed to prefer to spend his energies on logomachy and controversy. His sermons were exceedingly acute and intellectual, but hardly what Tenyson calls 'preaching simple Christ to simple men.' He had a great deal of family trouble, in which we sincerely sympathize, but his public troubles were pretty much of his own seeking; but he was not without his compensations for them in powerful friends, a very conspicuous position, and a larger share in this world's goods than generally falls to the lot of the Scottish clergy.

In the bulk of these volumes even the professed theological student will take only a wearisome interest, and the general reader will be glad that we have already said our say on the central subject of the work. Scattered about there are a few shrewd remarks, good stories, quaint reminiscences, and touches of contemporary manners. When Dr. Lee left his first parish he frankly told his people that he went away to get better pay. 'It's weel kent,' said a shrewd Scotchman, 'that the Lord never gies a call to a purier steepend.' People called him Erastian as they call Archbishop Tait Erastian, and he wrote a book about Erastus to show them how little they under-

* 'Life and Remains of Robert Lee, D.D., etc.' By R. H. Story. Two vols. Hurst and Blackett.

stood the nature of the term they employed. Macaulay wrote to him about it, saying, 'I have only had time to look very rapidly over the interesting account of Erastus, which contains much that is new to me.' Dr. Lee gave his political support to Macaulay, and Macaulay helped to get him a professorship. When Macaulay lost his election in 1847, he wrote to Dr. Lee two years later: 'I have every reason to be grateful to your fellow-citizens. If they had not dismissed me to my library, I should have been unable to complete my two volumes till 1850.' Archbishop Trench last session addressed the Lords as 'brethren'; a converse is afforded by an anecdote of Dr. Lee addressing his congregation as 'Gentlemen.' There are some very human touches in his Diary. 'Jack — appeared here this evening and told me he was living at the Royal Hotel. I found he had come here three days ago, and having no money, like a prudent man, he set himself down in the most expensive hotel he could find. I paid his bill for the poor fool. He had *smoked* twice as much money as would have kept a person who had any sense.' Here is an imaginary sketch of Lee's of what a certain pastor said to his congregation; perhaps he said it himself, or would have done so if he dared. 'Don't think I wish to come here simply to draw the stipend. I have another end in view. I believe that you are a set of hypocritical, canting, lying, cheating, tippling, psalm-singing, and praying scoundrels, and I should like to try my hand at pulling off the mask from your faces. And I give you fair warning that if I come here by the grace of God I will not spare you.'

Dr. Lee was more than once called upon to preach before her Majesty, at Crathie. His notices of such events do not fail to be interesting. After the sermon he had 'the honour of meeting the Queen, the Prince Consort, and the Princess Royal, and of dining at the Castle, and remaining there all night. The Prince Consort came to my room before dinner, and talked somewhat

more than an hour, in a very intelligent manner. The Queen was very gracious; commanded me to sit at her right hand, and chatted like any other well-bred, sensible lady.' Here is another Balmoral touch, as related by Mr. Story: 'Talking to me afterwards of the members of the Royal Family, whom he had met, he specially mentioned Prince Arthur, who had been at Balmoral at this time. Dr. Lee said, that after breakfast he had gone out to smoke a cigar, and was trying to strike a light, when he was joined by the Prince at the door. The match missed fire, and he was looking about for something on which to strike it again, when Prince Arthur, taking it from him, struck the match on the sole of his boot, and handed it back duly lighted. Dr. Lee, thanking his Royal Highness, said he would remember this lesson in match-lighting; and jokingly added that, when his biography came to be written, it should be recorded that his cigar at Balmoral was lighted for him by Prince Arthur; whereat the Prince had laughed and said he should be glad to have his name associated with Dr. Lee's in that or any way.'

From our point of view it is unnecessary to say anything more of Dr. Lee. He died of paralysis at Torquay. He was a good man according to his lights, but at times his lights were very confused and wavering. We really believe that there are circles where the debates of the General Assembly are of the keenest interest, and here these volumes will be received 'with effusion;' but to those who do not share those tastes, we would whisper—'By all means take the second volume, after the manner of corporate addresses to royalty, as read.'

THE IMPROVED CONDITION OF THE POOR.

Nothing can be more satisfactory than the proofs afforded by constant observation of the very improved condition of the poor. There is infinitely much that requires to be done—and I am afraid that the rate of improvement in the South is much more languid than that in the North.

But it is truly delightful to see the improvement in the North country—evidenced by the greater leisure, the cheaper pleasures and conveniences, the intellectual pursuits, the taste for social amusement and locomotion, evidenced in what would apparently be a hopeless population of a manufacturing district. In such a district there are frequently artisans who enjoy themselves, as their so-called 'betters' do, and often with a keener zest. Even people who work in mills or mines will take a day of rest beside the Sunday, will have their social tea-fight, will cultivate a genuine taste for music, will take the deepest interest in political and religious questions, and will often obtain a week's holiday at the sea-side. I don't despair of seeing the day when a labouring man, earning his three pounds a week, will have a honey-suckled cottage, and drive down to his place of employment in his own chaise. I will mention some very cheering instances of improvement which I lately observed in Yorkshire. The elevation of 'Titus Salt, of Saltaire,' as he is best known in his own Riding of Yorkshire, to a baronetcy by Mr. Gladstone, was, on many accounts, a graceful act of the Premier's, and calculated to give widespread satisfaction. It is much more than giving a political reward to an earnest and influential supporter of a political party. Mr. Salt has created Saltaire, and Saltaire has a place of its own in industrial history. Those who have ever visited Saltaire, or even that part of the country, will know how much is conveyed by this reminder. Where the river Aire, in a most picturesque part of Airedale, runs beneath wooded banks that expand into moorland the Salts have one of the vastest manufactories in the country, and have built the town of Saltaire. That manufactory, employing some four thousand hands, is in itself a spectacle not easily forgot, and would repay almost any amount of intelligent study. Those various processes which are generally distributed among different classes of manufacturers are here brought together into one vast laboratory. In

one compartment are huge piles of wool brought in, freshly imported from Constantinople or South America, and we are able to trace their transit through different processes until they emerge in fabrics fit for a fair woman to wear. In one direction we see an engine-house neat and burnished as some glittering hall, and in another, on a vast floor, we see a thousand looms plying at once. The great manufactory of Saltaire is one of the highest industrial triumphs of Yorkshire. Titus Salt threw himself with energy into the alpaca trade in its infancy, and is generally accredited with the possession of an enormous fortune. His benefactions, in any case, are most numerous and on a most large and beneficent scale. It seems a mere circumstance to him to give away five thousand pounds at a time. But the town which he has called into existence at Saltaire is truly remarkable and in many respects might be taken as a model. The workmen possess cottages, where for the same price or less than a London artisan pays for a crowded garret, he has a building of two stories, furnished with every comfort and convenience. He has a large dining-hall where he may take his meals or be furnished with the best provisions at cost price. They have reading-rooms, and bath-rooms; and both may be obtained for twopence or threepence, and the luxury of an excellent Turkish bath—which seems, however, to be hardly appreciated by the workmen—can be obtained for sixpence. Sir Titus has built and, we believe, endowed a splendid chapel, of the most ample and decorative kind, and with a decided resemblance to a metropolitan music-hall, and liberally supports other religious bodies in all good works. No public-house is permitted within the town, but they cluster on the confines; and it might perhaps be better if some were allowed within his territory, subject to his supervision. Children are only allowed to work half time at the mill and for the rest are sent to school. Altogether, we have rarely investigated any district with greater pleasure and instruction.

Such a system goes far to show how class may be associated with class, and the conflicting claims of capital and labour be reconciled. Workmen are too much degraded into 'hands,' and often there is a thorough want of sympathy and mutual good understanding between masters and men. Sir Titus Salt has shown an excellent example of a better state of things; and he is perhaps the most satisfactory of all Mr. Gladstone's recent lavish promotions, which almost threaten to cheapen and vulgarize the honours of the Crown.

SACRED POETRY.

In the world of letters there are certain still, secluded nooks which lie altogether away from the beaten thoroughfare, not often visited, and requiring a purged, instructed eye for the perception of their beauties, but satisfying the mind with a feeling of rest, refreshment and delight. There never fails a succession of those who are England's sacred poets, who secure an audience 'fit and few' for themselves, although their course is little noticed by contemporary literature. People in general, perhaps, care little for such a fact as that an appendix has been issued to 'Hymns Ancient and Modern,' although there are vast numbers of people to whom such a fact is of the highest interest. Criticism may concern itself with the literary merits of such poetry, and even correctly gauge their degree of intellectual excellence; but, for the most part, the substantive matter of such poems lies in a region higher than mere criticism, and is hardly subject to their canons. Our sacred poets would also affirm, with truth, that the reviews of contemporary critics are comparatively of slight moment to them, and that they are quite content to be forgotten in the rush of novelties, if only they may have a durable effect in imparting consolation and in building up character.

Yet it would be easy for us to enumerate some half-dozen poets who, more or less, deserve the name of sacred poets; who, more or less, have names familiar to large audiences of readers; whose poems are

expected with eager interest, and, though little noticed in contemporary criticism, pass through as large editions as current books whose merits are everywhere canvassed. Such a degree of popularity could not be obtained by any amount of religious enthusiasm, unless the æsthetic sense were satisfied as well as the religious sense, unless these poems fully met the requirements of culture. The danger to the reading public is that the theological colour of such poetry should deter from an examination of the poetry itself. We often wish that religious people had tastes sufficiently broad to enable them to understand the higher departments of secular literature; and the regret may be reversed when we think of the undisguised indifference to sacred poets which exists in so many cultivated minds. As watching the current of literature, we believe we shall do rightly in bringing before our readers some of our contemporary sacred poets, with a few carefully-selected citations. We especially begin with one revered name, the great successor to Charles Wesley and George Herbert.

Since we last spoke of Mr. Keble in these pages, a new edition of his life, by Sir J. T. Coleridge, has appeared. It embodies some of the correspondence with Hurrell Froude, so curiously discovered, together with some old jewellery. Still more valuable, we consider, is the reliquary volume of Keble, the book of *Miscellaneous Poems*, edited, we believe, by the present Bishop of Salisbury. It is a new aspect in which to contemplate the venerable Keble; to see him, fresh from college, writing love verses on the sweet Devonian coast, or in green old age writing cheerful sportive lines for the amusement and instruction of the young. We gain much from such home revelations of the poet's character, for they are profoundly natural, and bring him more from the dim religious light into the common day. Some of the special poems, such as the hymn which he wrote for a meeting of the British Association, or the poem on the Duke of Wellington's installation

at Oxford, or on leaving Corpus Christi for Oriel College, are full of personal interest. Our space for quotation is limited, but we must quote a few lines which he wrote in the album at Cuddesden. The Bishop of Oxford now leaves Cuddesden for Winchester; but the recollections of the glorious society that assembled there, the wits and politicians, the saints and pastor, will long remain there, never to be surpassed. The vicinity of Oxford, in historical times, has often witnessed many noble gatherings; as Clarendon tells us of the gatherings at Lord and Lady Falkland's, and we all know something of the gatherings at Blenheim. Those at Cuddesden will hardly be less memorable. Here are the lines which Keble wrote in that album:—

'Whoe'er from Cuddesden's pastoral shade
Shall seek the green hill's point, and gaze
On Oxford in the watery glade,
And seem half lost in memory's maze,
Much wondering where his thoughts of good
Have flown since last in that lone nook he stood;
But wondering more untiring Love should be
So busy round the unworthiest; let him see
There hath before him been one musing e'en
as he.'

Among our sacred poetesses there are hardly any we can name of sweeter, purer minstrelsy than Dora Greenwell. Her 'Carmine Crucis' adds one more volume to the most touching and elevating department of our literature. Much of her general poetry is deservedly popular, but she is now especially taking her place as a sacred poet. Were ever strains more earnest and consolatory than these which follow?

VESPERS.

'When I have said my quiet say,
When I have sung my little song,
How sweetly, sweetly dies the day
The valley and the hill along;
How sweet the summons, "Come away!"
That calls us from the busy throng!

'I thought beside the water's flow
A while to lie beneath the leaves,
I thought in autumn's harvest glow
To rest my head upon the sheaves;
But, lo! methinks the day was brief
And cloudy; flower nor fruit nor leaf
I bring, and yet accepted, free,
And blest, my Lord, I come to Thee.

'What matter now for promise lost,
Through blast of spring or summer rains?

What matter now for purpose crost.
For broken hopes and wasted pains?
What if the olive little yields?
What if the grape be blighted? Thine
The corn upon a thousand fields,
Upon a thousand hills the vine.

'Thou lovest still the poor; oh, blest
In poverty beloved to be!
Less lowly is my choice confessor'd,
I love the rich in loving Thee!
My spirit bare before Thee stands;
I bring no gift, I ask no sign.
I come to Thee with empty hands,
The same to be fill'd from Thine!

Another lady who writes sacred poetry with a uniform degree of excellence rarely excelled, is Miss Frances R. Havergal. Her 'Ministry of Song' (Christian Book Society) is really one of those books which one would desire to keep in the case of treasured volumes which lies nearest to us on our table, and from which one is never long absent. Almost at random we select the touching piece entitled

'MY SWEET WOODRUFF.

'No more the flowers of spring are seen,
And silence fills the summer noon;
The woods have lost the fresh bright green
Of May and June.

'But yesterday I found a flower,
Deep sheltered from the withering rays
Which might have shown the sun and shower
Of April days.

'I did not think again to find
Such tender relic of the spring;
It thrills such gladness through my mind,
I needs must sing.

'My girlhood's spring has passed for aye,
With many a fairy tint and tone:
The heat and burden of the day
Are better known.

'But by my summer path has sprung
A flower of happy love, as fair
As e'er a subtle fragrance flung
On spring's clear air.

'I hardly thought to feel again
Such dewy freshness in my heart,
And so one little loving strain
Must upward shoot.

'There was spring-sunshine in my eyes,
I had such joy in finding you
So full of all I love and prize,
So dear and true.

'My heart is richer far to-day,
Than when I came a week ago;
How near to me such treasure lay
I did not know.

'The long parenthesis is o'er,
And now, in letters all of light,
The story of our love once more
We both may write.

'I have no words to breathe the praise
Which now for His "good gift" I owe;
A wordless anthem I must raise,
But He will know.'

The Rev. Charles Turner's two volumes of sonnets have obtained a recognition for their great literary merits, which extend far beyond the esoteric circle of religious readers. Mr. Turner is the eldest brother of Alfred Tennyson the Laureate. The sonnets have many wonderful lines which the younger brother might have written: lines not unworthy of the sonnets of Shakspeare and Milton. We select two:—

'HOW THE "HIGHER CRITICISM" BLESSES THE
BIBLE.

'You say 'tis still God's Book,' still true and
wise—

Though you have shorn it of its noblest parts,
Disparaged all its great biographies,
And left no nourishment for pining hearts;
But that's a foodless river, where the fish
Are stolen from the waters, every fin,
Whence thieves have harried all that God put
in,
And spared no scarce enough to freight a dish;
So have you stolen away our food for faith—
With Moses disallowed, and Paul reviewed,
And Christ Himself by rival pens pursued,
That race each other through His life and
death—

It irks my soul to see how bland you look,
Giving your foolish blessing to the Book!

'THE BEE-WISP.

'Our window-panes enthrall our summer bees
(To insect woes I give this little page)—
We hear them thrashing in their idle rage
Those crystal floors of famine, while, at ease,
Their outdoor comrades probe the nectaries
Of flowers, and into all sweet blossoms dive;
Then home, at sundown, to the happy hive,
On forward wing, straight through the dancing
flies:

For such poor strays a full-plumed wisp I keep,
And when I see them pining, worn, and vexed,
I brush them softly with a downward sweep
To the raised sash—all angered and perplex:
So man, the insect, stands on his defence
Against the very hand of Providence!'

We will venture to say that two finer sonnets than these are hardly to be found in the whole compass of English literature. It is to us a matter of absolute amazement that Mr. Turner's immense poetical powers have not been manifested on a larger field than that exhibited by these two slight volumes. But we cannot say that the time has been mispent which has been passed in the active duties of a Lincolnshire parish.

Mr. Turner—it may interest our readers to be informed—is the brother to whom is addressed a section of 'In Memoriam.'

'More than my brothers are to me—
Let not this vex thee, noble soul.'

If our space permitted we should like to refer to the poems of those clergymen of whom the world will probably hear more, Herbert Todd, J. S. Stone, and Richard Wilton. We will once more recur to the sonnet, and take one of Mr. Todd's. It has been hitherto unpublished, and refers to the lake scenery.

'BORROWDALE.

'As one who after a long sultry day
Of pilgrimage mid mountains rude and vast,
Spent and outwearied with the journey past,
Draws near the hostelry where he shall stay;
His feet so bruised by the length of way
They lag though hastening; his strength down-
cast
By utter feebleness; he sees at last
Through the thick gloom of night the ruddy ray
Of his low inn delightless. Even so
We see with age's dim, indifferent eyes,
With joyless hearts that beat faintly and low,
The grave at hand, gateway of Paradise,
Too tired with life's long march of pain and
woe
To hail at last our homestead in the skies.'



DEAD CALM.

NEWSPAPER-READERS (or some of them) have recently been a little perplexed to understand how it can be that a ship is ever in trouble because in a *calm*. We are so accustomed to associate nautical miseries with raging hurricanes, waves mountains-high, shoals, breakers, sunken rocks, and savage cliffs, that we find it easy to realize mariners' perplexities when

'The stormy winds do blow ;

and we do not fail to remark that the 'gentlemen of England' who live (more or less, sometimes less) at home at ease are reproached in the lines

'How little do you think upon
The dangers of the sea.'

But it is rather new to us to hear the seafaring world bemoaning over the absence of winds and the like.

Of course the miseries arising from *contrary* winds are of a different nature, though still more distressing in their results. In the days when the Atlantic was only crossed, if crossed at all, by sailing ships, there was one occasion in which west winds prevailed for six weeks together; ships, even the fine 'liners,' were so completely baffled on the voyage out to America that eighteen mails were overdue at New York at one time. The British ship 'Diamond' was actually one hundred days from Liverpool to that port, in the early months of 1837. The consequences were most pitiable, even harrowing. There were a hundred and eighty passengers on board, many of whom were literally starved to death. The crew were put upon short allowance, which became very short, though kept up to the end, but the poor steerage passengers suffered intensely. One man lived nine days on potato peelings soaked in his scanty allowance of water. Some, who had exceptional stores of food, sold portions of their stock to less fortunate or less provident persons. At first these sales were at moderate prices; but as the scarcity became more fully developed, as much as half a sovereign

was given for a pint of meal: nay, in one case, when matters were becoming more and more desperate, a sovereign was offered, and *refused*, for a potato while roasting at the fire!

But let us attend to our calm. On the 7th of the recent month of August, warm and dry, her Majesty's frigate 'Topaze,' on her way from the Pacific, got into a dead calm in that part of the Atlantic which lies a little north-west of the Azores. At sunset on that day, no fewer than sixty-six sailing ships were lying motionless on the sleeping waters near one another, in that locality. Not a breath of wind ruffled the glassy surface of the ocean. The splash of a flying fish was quite an event; and the falling of a beef-bone overboard was equally marked as a disturbance of tranquillity. One of the ships, the 'Agra,' had been locked in this trance of nature for fourteen days; and the frigate had to supply her with provisions—seeing that she could not move to fetch food; nor could any of the sailing ships bring food to her. Not one puff of wind to blow a single flag; all lost the liveliness which seems to belong naturally to a flag; all hung down in morbid quietude.

The truth is, that calms are quite as natural as storms in the ocean, though far less frequent. The varying heat at the surface of the earth is the main cause of both of them. Trade winds, monsoons, simooms, siroccos—all depend on the fact that one locality is warmer than another, and that air rushes in from the colder to the warmer regions. The daily rotation of the earth determines the *direction* of some of these winds, but the winds themselves owe their origin to the cause just named. There are two kinds of calms—those which depend permanently on the latitude, and those which result from temporary peculiarities in winds counteractive of each other. The former are far the more important of the two. There is a *region of calms* near the Equator. When the sun is in the

northern hemisphere (our summer) this region extends as far north as 15° N. lat., with a south-east trade wind between it and the Equator; but when the sun is in the southern hemisphere (our winter), the calms extend nearly from the Equator to the latitude of England. Only a small portion of this wide-spreading region is, however, calm at any one time, a belt varying from two to ten degrees of latitude in width: this belt is always north of the Equator in the Atlantic—a fact supposed to be due in some degree to the relative conformation of Africa and America.

It is often a terrible time while a ship is passing through these calms. If the vessel be a steamer, she can forge along by paddle or screw whether there be any wind or not; but if an ordinary sailing ship, she remains like a log on the water—her sails almost utterly useless. The temperature in those latitudes is usually very high; and in such cases the mariners are exposed to a fierce heat which there is no escaping. The old navigators, before the days of steam, suffered more from the calms than the go-ahead seamen of the present day; and their narratives contain frequent allusions to these matters. Adamson, who coasted along the west side of Africa about a hundred and twenty years ago, says: 'At the time when we were within two hundred leagues of the coast, between seventeen and eighteen degrees of latitude, a calm came on which lasted almost fifteen days, with suffocating heats: it was so still that the ship did not seem to change situation. There is nothing more tiresome than to be in a vessel becalmed; and nothing more dreadful than to be far out at sea when provisions begin to run short.'

The effect of this quiescent stagnant condition during torrid heat was capitally described by the late Captain Basil Hall, whose narratives of voyages and sea-life are among the best in the language. Once, when commanding a man-of-war conveying a fleet of merchantmen, he was beset by a calm. 'The faint zephyrs, which had coquetted

with our languid sails for an hour or two, at length took their leave, first of the courses, then of the top-sails, and lastly of the royals and the smaller flying kites aloft. We could distinguish nothing around, save one polished dark-heaving sea, and the bright clear sky in the mirror beneath. From the heat, which soon became intense, there was no escape, either on deck or below, aloft in the tops or, still higher, on the cross-trees. Neither could we find relief down in the hold; for it was all the same, except that in the exposed situations we were scorched or roasted, in the other suffocated. The useless wheel was lashed amidships; the yards were lowered on the cap; and the boats were dropped into the water to fill up the cracks and rents caused by the fierce heat. A listless feeling stole over us all, and we lay about the decks gasping for breath, in vain seeking some alleviation to our thirst by drink! drink! drink! Alas! the transient indulgence only made the matter worse.'

But the extraordinary part of this phenomenon is the danger which ships sometimes incur of slowly grinding and crushing each other. It is about the very last thing we should expect, in vessels lying motionless on the water. Some kind of attraction seems to arise, the nature of which has not been fully ascertained. Captain Basil Hall states that many such instances as the following are known to have occurred. An anxious alarm springs up among the crews when they perceive two ships slowly drifting towards each other. The motion, slow and gentle as it may appear to the eye, becomes irresistible in its force. As the chances are against the two vessels moving exactly in the same direction at the same moment, they must speedily grind or tear each other to pieces. Supposing them to come in contact side by side, the first collision would probably tear away the fore and main chains of both ships by interlacing the lower yards; and entangling the spars of one ship with the shrouds and backstays of the other, would in all likelihood bring down the masts of

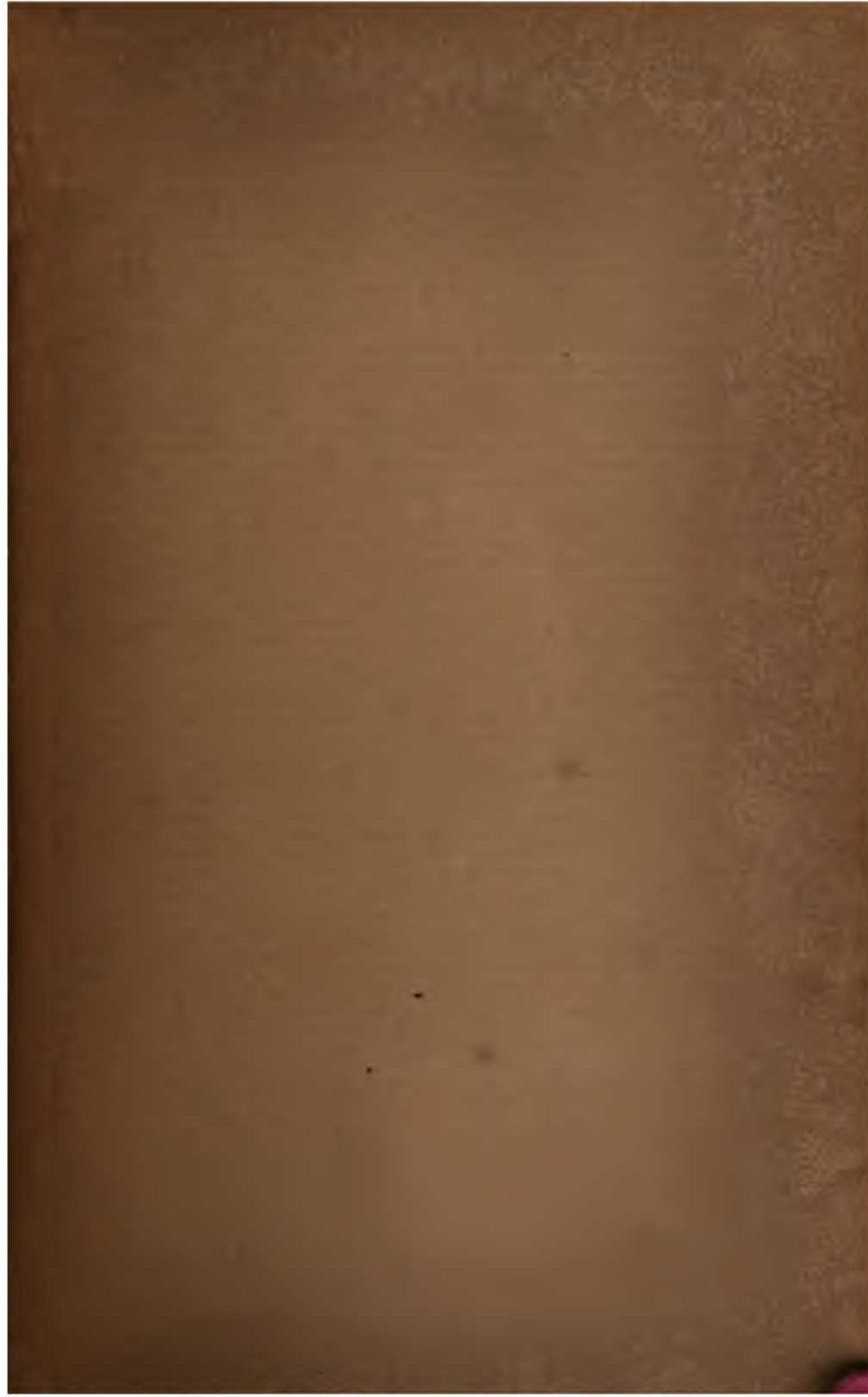
both ships—not piecemeal, but in one furious crash. 'Beneath the ruins of the spars, the coils of rigging, and the enormous folds of canvas, might be crushed many of the best hands, who, from being always the foremost to spring forward in such seasons of danger, are surest to be sacrificed. After the first catastrophe, the ships would probably drift away from one another for a little while, only to tumble together again and again, till they had ground one another to the water's edge, and one or both of them would fill and go down. In such encounters it is impossible to stop the mischief, and oak and iron break and crumble to pieces like sealingwax or piecrust.'

Of course we are not to suppose that such terrible disasters are always, or even generally, the result of being becalmed. Only under special circumstances is such the case. More usually, the mariners are able to detect the approach of this very *unfraternal* hug in time to prevent it. They hoist out the boats in readiness, and tow the two ships to a safe distance apart; or (which is generally sufficient), turn the heads in directly opposite positions: seeing that every ship, by its very build, has naturally a tendency to move ahead rather than astern. When there is not a breath of wind to act upon the sails, there may still be a slight current in the water beneath; and the sailors have a method of ascertaining in which direction this current tends. They row a boat out to a little distance from the ship, and throw overboard a plummet weighing forty pounds or so, attached to a line; this they

lower to a depth of two hundred fathoms, where it acts (so nearly still is the sea) as a kind of anchor to keep the boat in its place; the boat turns its head in the direction of whatever current there may be, as it would do if anchored.

Nor are we to suppose that the calm latitudes are often absolutely calm: else such steamers as her Majesty's 'Topaze' would espy, those fleets of helpless sail almost every time of steaming up and down the Atlantic. Light breezes sometimes blow in the Region of Calms, usually from some point between south and west; and besides this, the calm is commonly interrupted every day by a wind which lasts a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. Soon after noon a black and well-defined cloud forms near the east, and is followed by a sharp gust of wind for a few minutes, accompanied by a few drops of rain; all this soon clears off, and the calm resumes its monotonous reign. The navigator makes use of every such puff of wind as a God-send, helping him by some short distance across the Region of Calms. At the very best, however, these calms are wearisome and disheartening affairs. A commentator on the 'Topaze' spectacle has aptly observed that human life and a sea-voyage present some analogy here: 'Better half a gale than glassy swelter; better trouble in life than stagnation and dead calm.' True, those who have to bear the said life-troubles yearn for a calm; but there can be no doubt that, in the long run, a little diversity is better, both on shore and on sea, than a monotonous equality of events and conditions.



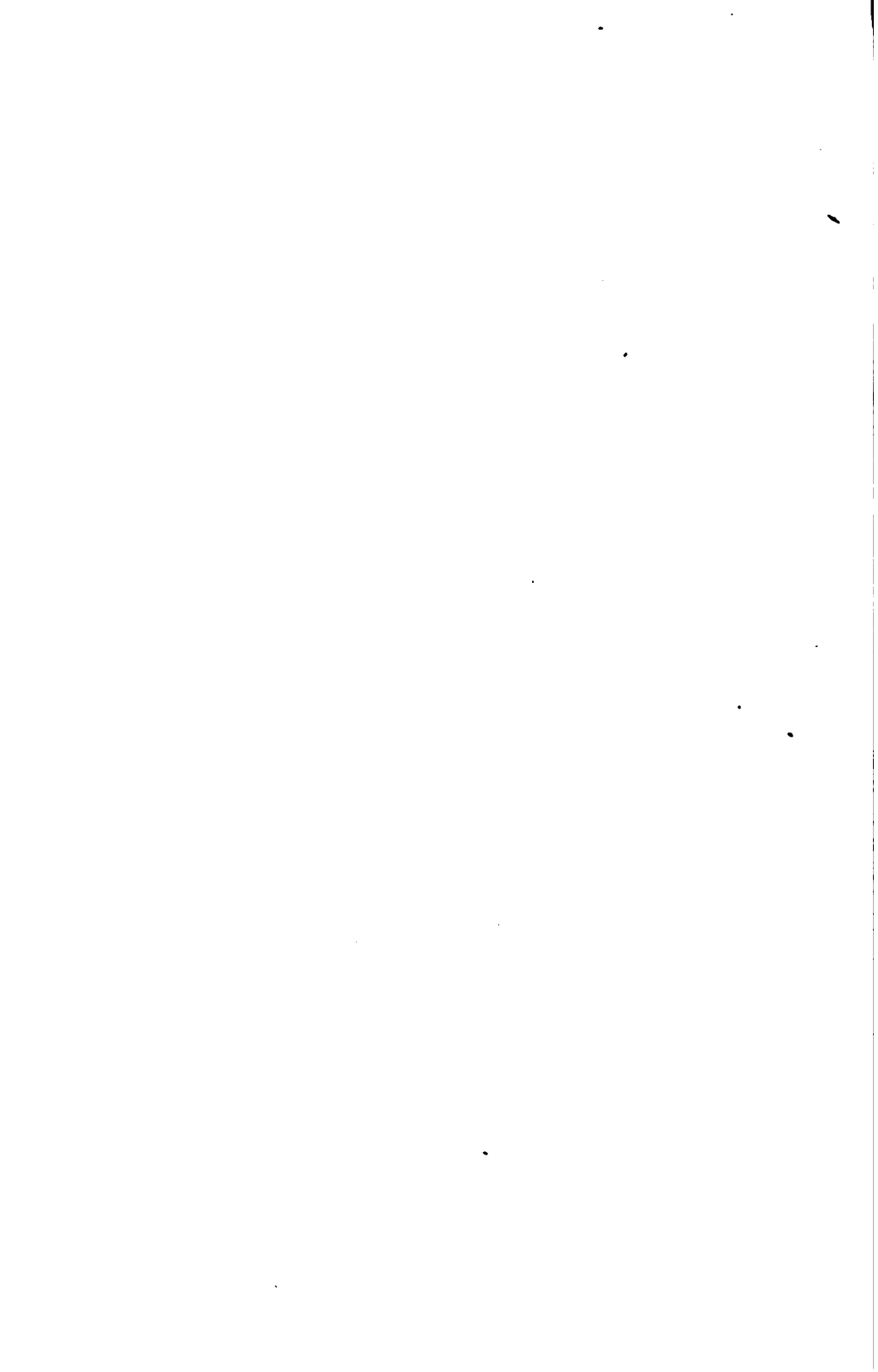




SIR STEPHEN'S QUESTION.

From "Mornington."





LONDON SOCIETY.

FEBRUARY, 1870.



CASTLES IN THE AIR. *Built by Saint Valentine.*

MATCHMAKING.

I.

THREE very different breakfast-tables were linked together one morning by each receiving an invitation to the same country house.

The first place belongs to Sir Ste-

phen Dashwood's, in virtue of his superior, though not very exalted, rank of baronet.

He was alone with his mother, who held in her hand an open letter,

and looking up from it said, 'Dear Stephen, you must go, to please me.' The last words said so pleadingly, in such a soft, sweet voice, that it seemed strange to hear him answer sternly, 'No, mother; you know how little I care for that sort of thing. A gay party in such a house as the Dudley Harewoods' is the last I should wish to join. I am really becoming an old man, and I mean to stay at home now.'

'You are not forty yet.'

'Thirty-nine. Quite old enough to be allowed to give up dissipation and take care of my mother.'

'Give me one year more, Stephen. I cannot give up my hope of a pretty young mistress for the old Court. Don't look so sad, dear; it is fifteen years since Annie died. Even if she had been your wife you have mourned her too long. I cannot bear to see all the brightness of your life buried in her grave.'

Sir Stephen walked to a window and looked out on his beautiful park for some minutes, but his eyes had an absent look, and all he saw was a white marble cross in a churchyard far away.

He came back to Lady Dashwood at last, and said in a low voice, 'I will go to this place, as you wish it so much. As to marrying, I have often told you I would marry if I could care for any one; but no one has made my heart beat faster since—since—years ago. Dearest mother, why will you not be content to be the only woman I love?'

'Content! Yes, for myself; but I should be so happy, Stephen, to leave this dear old place to your wife, and to go and wait in my own little home for the time for me to meet your dear father again. An old woman may wait to rejoin the husband she loved for thirty years; but, indeed, your case is different.'

'My dear mother, I never thought of comparing it. I have promised. I will go to Birchleigh; but what on earth has that to do with my marrying?'

'Why, in your letter, did you not see the Ashleys are asked?'

'Well?'

'I like Miss Ashley so much. She is such a nice, sensible girl.

Not less than twenty-six, so that she would not be too young. Good-looking, so well connected, on her father's side, and an heiress! Not that you need marry for money, but there is a great deal you could do here with it.'

'So she is the selected victim! I grant she is pleasant and handsome. However, unfortunately, there are two serious objections to your plan, my dear lady. I do not care for her, and I am sure she does not care for me.'

'You must make yourself care for her. And then, my dear boy, do you suppose any woman could help caring for you?' And the fond mother looked up with pride at her really very handsome son.

He laughed good-humouredly. 'Young ladies are not so infatuated as you are; but I promise to go to this place, and also to try to like Miss Ashley; only my firm conviction is that I shall come back as heart-whole as I go.' And Sir Stephen sighed as he thought how very far he was from being heart-whole. The old sorrow, nevertheless, had partly changed into a sad memory, and his mother had, at last, made him almost believe that it was very irksome to her to take charge of his hospitable house, and also that, as the last of an ancient race, it was his positive duty to marry. Caring for no one, he was now almost ready to propose to any one his mother wished, partly to please her, partly from a sad weariness of the subject.

'When people think they are safe they are often in most danger,' answered Lady Dashwood.

'And there's dancing in the case, too,' groaned her son, as he took up his invitation again. 'What does Mrs. Harewood say? "Dear Mary's birthday is on the 20th, and she has set her heart on a ball." I certainly bless "dear Mary" for the thought. Am I to dance at my age, mother?'

'Yes, yes; you quite weary me with your age. I can't bear the young men of the present day, and I am quite sure all sensible people agree with me.'

Sir Stephen sighed. 'Then I desert you on Monday week?'

'Yes, of course: and now I must

go and look after your tiresome household affairs. Write at once and accept, before you have time to repent.'

The second breakfast was that of the Ashleys, already mentioned. Mr. Ashley was a good specimen of an English country gentleman. His life had been marred, however, by one mistake—his wife. Youth and beauty had hidden her innate vulgarity from him, while riches had made his father overlook her inequality of position. Mr. Ashley was a sensible man, so he made the best of it, and had now got accustomed to his burden; while, for his sake partly, partly for her own real kindness of disposition, his wife was always well received by his friends. As they now sat at their luxurious breakfast-table they looked as if they had always lived prosperous lives, with plenty round them. This was really the case; but the last few years a great sorrow had gained on Mrs. Ashley. This was, that her daughter was unmarried. Her *only* daughter, her eldest child, so handsome, so well educated, so popular, and an heiress (through her godmother, Mrs. Ashley's sister), that *she* should be unmarried seemed dreadful! There was no reason for this, save that Caroline, with heart untouched, and very happy at home, saw no reason to accept any one of her numerous suitors. Sundry hints had been given to Mrs. Ashley by Lady Dashwood of her willingness to consent to a marriage between the heiress and Sir Stephen, but Mrs. Ashley had never mentioned the subject to her daughter. However, this morning Mrs. Dudley Harewood, who was well aware how much her friend Lady Dashwood desired the match, had said in her letter of invitation that she expected Sir Stephen Dashwood would join their party, and consequently, as she had hoped, Mrs. Ashley was all eagerness to accept the invitation.

'John,' she said—and Mr. Ashley looked up, rather annoyed by the interruption, for he was a man of one idea, and breakfast was now occupying his thoughts—'John, there is nothing, I hope, to prevent

our going to the Dudley Harewoods on the 18th?'

'I have meetings on Tuesday and Friday.'

'Oh! you can manage to get back in time on Friday, and you must send an excuse for Tuesday.'

'What's the good of going? We've just got home.'

'They are going to have a dance, and of course you will have some excellent shooting.'

'I'm quite content with my own.'

'Oh, nonsense, my dear!' this good-humouredly and coaxingly; 'such a nice house to stay in. Carrie will like some dancing, and it is so good of Mrs. Harewood to ask Jack and Willie too, glancing at two tall youths who made up the breakfast-party.'

'Well, well, I suppose I must go, so you can write and accept. Come along, boys; I'm going to the farm.'

Left alone with her daughter, Mrs. Ashley felt nervous. If Carrie was to marry Sir Stephen it was perhaps time to speak to her on the subject; and with much trepidation she gave her the letter, hoping for some remark that might serve to introduce the idea.

Carrie, however, handed back the letter in silence, and Mrs. Ashley plunged into her subject.

'Carrie, my dear, I hope Sir Stephen Dashwood will be there.'

Carrie opened her large eyes a little wider, and raised her well-marked eyebrows. 'Do you, mamma? I always think he is heavy.'

'Oh, no; it is his way to be rather silent—so much better than the rattle of the young men of the present day.'

A long pause followed. Then—

'Carrie, did you never think Sir Stephen admired you?'

'Not more than most people.' This was said so prettily that it did not sound pert; and she added, sadly, 'Ah, mother! a fortune is a great beautifier.'

'Don't talk such nonsense, my dear. So much admired as you have always been! But I do wish you would marry; you are so difficult to please, I am afraid you will end by being an old maid.'

Carrie flushed angrily, but she

answered in her usual low voice, 'Pray do not speak as if that were any degradation. I am very happy as I am, and I do not intend to marry unless I am, what people call, "in love." The world thinks men so fascinating it cannot believe a girl can have reached twenty-six without falling *in love* with some one of them. It makes me furious the way people talk! A girl who marries the first man who asks her is allowed to live in peace. A girl who does not wish to marry, who has refused a dozen offers, and might with a little trouble have refused another dozen, is worried till she is almost ready to marry the next person who asks her. Is the disgrace of old maidism in the mere fact of not being married, or in being supposed not to have been asked? for in the latter case I might get a certificate.'

Mrs. Ashley was rather bewildered, and answered, 'Certainly, my dear, but it is not usual.'

Caroline began to laugh, and Mrs. Ashley returned to the charge.

'Well, my dear, I like Sir Stephen very much, and so does your papa; and I have good reason to believe Sir Stephen is devotedly attached to you.'

This romantic sentiment was uttered in all good faith. Lady Dashwood, in talking to Mrs. Ashley, had, perhaps unintentionally, allowed her to imply a great deal more than was really the case.

Carrie flushed again, but not this time with anger. Sir Stephen was a man whose love a girl might well be proud of, even though she could not return it.

A pause followed. Then Mrs. Ashley said, as she rose to leave the room, 'I beg, Caroline, that you will not be rude to Sir Stephen. I am sure you would easily learn to like him; and it would be such a comfort to us to leave you, with your large fortune, safe with such a good man.'

'Which, me or the fortune?' was Miss Ashley's answer to this appeal, adding, quickly, 'I beg your pardon, mamma; I *do* like him, only I don't want to marry him, or any one else.'

Mrs. Ashley was gone.

'Oh dear me!' was Carrie's muttered exclamation, 'who would be an heiress? I believe I must marry the man to put an end to the bother.'

At eight o'clock that morning the sun had shone on a very different scene, our third breakfast-table.

It was a very frugal meal, in a wretched little house in the dismal manufacturing town of M——.

Mr. Barlow was a hardworking curate, and his wife, if possible, worked harder than he did. Still, as they sat at opposite ends of their crowded table, there was an air of cheerful happiness round them, and the little room had a certain air of refinement.

Being a poor curate, I need hardly explain that the epithet 'crowded' applies to children—the eldest a girl of seventeen, with golden-brown hair and large blue eyes: the youngest a baby on its mother's knee.

Mrs. Barlow, having supplied the children with food, and comparative quiet reigning, took up a letter, and said to her husband, 'I want to consult you about Mrs. Dudley Harewood's invitation.'

It should be stated that father and mother would be too much occupied to talk after breakfast, and so, perforce, all affairs that could be were discussed without regard to children.

'Mrs. Dudley Harewood! Who is she?'

'Oh, William! You must remember. My dear old friend long ago, Mary Norton. You know I told you I was going to write to her, and ask her if she knew of any one Aimée could go to.'

'Oh, yes. I beg your pardon. I had so much to think of this morning. Perhaps you would read me what she says; my class is so early this morning.'

Mrs. Barlow read.

'I am distressed you should think it needful to part with your daughter, but, happily, I think I know of the very thing for her. Mrs. Danvers, who is a great friend of mine, has two little girls, and is very anxious to have a young governess for them who knows French well.

From your having been so much abroad this would suit your Aimée. Mrs. Danvers is a charming person, and I believe the girls are nice children. Would you allow your daughter to come and stay here on the 18th? We have a dance for Mary's birthday on the 20th, which I think she would enjoy, and I should be able to make friends with her before the end of the month, when I expect Mrs. Danvers to come to us, and she and Aimée could see how they like each other. Do let your child come, for the sake of old times. It would give me such pleasure to be trusted with her.'

'That is all about Aimée. What do you think of it?'

'Certainly, she must go. You would like it, Aimée?' and Mr. Barlow turned to his pretty little daughter.

'I don't know, papa. No, please, I would rather not.' And her large eyes filled with tears.

'That is foolish, my child. We are obliged to send you into the world, and it would be neither wise nor right to lose this chance of securing you a kind friend.'

'But the ball?' interposed the mother.

'One dance need not turn her little head. I think it would be pleasant for her to have a little of what the world calls "pleasure" before she begins to work. And clothes?' groaned Mr. Barlow, in despair.

'Never mind that, though, my dear, if you really think she ought to go, I'll manage.'

'I think she ought to go.'

'Then I will write to-day and accept for her.'

Mr. Barlow went off to his work. Half a dozen children were sent out to walk, in the care of each other and one small nurse girl; two boys sat in a corner, out of the way, with a Latin grammar; and Mrs. Barlow and the two eldest girls proceeded to wash up the breakfast things.

Talk went on over this occupation, Aimée tearful and in terror of it all; Susan, the next girl, eager and happy at the unusual excitement; Mrs. Barlow, miserable at the long-dreaded idea of sending

her daughter! away from home, thankful that there seemed such a good beginning for her life, and completely at a loss how to provide a ball-dress.

This immediate trouble outweighed the others for the moment. At last she said with a sigh, 'We must get enough white muslin to make two high dresses, and they will be useful afterwards if you go to Mrs. Danvers. It would be waste to get you a ball-dress you would never wear again, and I am sure my Aimée is too sensible to mind not being as well-dressed as the other young ladies.'

'Oh, no, mamma. The whole thing frightens me, but not the ball more than anything else. I don't think a governess ought to be fine.'

'You will look very nice, my darling, whatever you wear. Mrs. Harewood will give you some flowers for your hair, I dare say. The journey is what distresses me most. We cannot afford to send any one with you, and I cannot bear the idea of your going so far alone.'

'Oh, mother, mother! If I could only stay with you,' and Aimée dropped the sancer she was wiping and buried her face on her mother's knee in an agony of tears. Alas! only the prelude to many more, to be shed before the misery of leaving home for the first time was over.

II.

The dreaded Monday came, and Aimée was looking out of the window of a railway carriage at the M— station, choking back her tears, while her father stood below, giving a guard a hardly-spared half-crown and instructions to look after his daughter. As usual, the guard was most civil, and locked the door, with many promises that, if possible, the young lady should be alone all the way. The train was just going to start; Mr. Barlow said good-bye for the last time, and Aimée, at last giving way, threw herself down on a seat at the further end of the carriage, and burst into tears. Almost at the same moment a tall, handsome man ran across the platform, another guard looking hurriedly into

Aimée's carriage, so hurriedly as not to see her in her dark corner, unlocked the door, saying, 'Empty compartment here, Sir Stephen,' and Sir Stephen Dashwood jumped in. The train immediately started, and, almost as immediately, Sir Stephen realised that as it did not stop for two hours, he would for precisely that length of time enjoy the exclusive society of a weeping woman, which prospect filled him with consternation.

However, English people are not usually expected to speak to each other till they are introduced; so, though Sir Stephen was very tender-hearted, and every sob of poor Aimée's affected him most disagreeably, he settled himself as far as possible from her, and began to study the 'Times.'

Aimée cried for some time. Her own sobs and the great noise at the station had prevented her noticing Sir Stephen's entrance, and when, after some time had passed, she wiped away her tears and raised her head, she gave a start and cry of surprise at seeing him opposite her. Sir Stephen looked up, and for a moment they stared at each other without speaking, Sir Stephen being really startled by such unexpected beauty. Aimée possessed the rare gift of crying without disfiguring herself, and now, her eyes looking larger and brighter than usual, the tears still hanging on their lashes, Sir Stephen thought she was the loveliest thing he had ever seen. He smiled at last and said, 'I am afraid I startled you.' Not to speak to anything so beautiful was impossible, and he was still more fascinated by the sweet, low voice in which Aimée answered, 'Oh, no; it was only I did not know any one had got in.'

'Are you going far?' continued Sir Stephen, anxious not to let the conversation drop.

'Rather. But please, if you don't mind—I don't want to be rude—mamma told me not to talk to strangers,' and Aimée crimsoned with confusion.

'But we ought not to be strangers,' persisted Sir Stephen, 'for I think we both come from M——.'

'Yes.'

'Perhaps you have heard of Sir Stephen Dashwood?'

'Oh, yes, I have often heard papa speak of him. He says he is so good, and gives so much money in charity.'

It was Sir Stephen's turn to colour a little, but he laughed and said, 'I am glad to hear I have such a good character.'

'I beg your pardon,' was all Aimée could stammer out, as his identity dawned upon her.

'I hope now you will allow me to take care of you as far as we go together?'

'Thank you,' was all that it occurred to Aimée to say.

'And now, may I ask your name?'

'Barlow.'

'Barlow! Is the Mr. Barlow who is curate at St. John's your father?'

'Yes.'

'Then, Miss Barlow, indeed we ought not to be strangers. I assure you your father and I are great friends; we see each other so often at meetings at M——.'

Aimée looked delighted, and Sir Stephen went on. 'I should like to know where you are going, if it is not rude to ask?'

'To Birchleigh,' she answered.

'The Dudley Harewoods' place?'

'Yes.'

'How odd! I am going there too.'

'Oh! I am so glad,' exclaimed Aimée, 'for I don't know any one there.'

'That's rather a doubtful compliment to me.'

'I beg your pardon.' And Aimée looked so miserable that Sir Stephen quickly answered, 'I beg yours. I know what you meant: but don't you know Mrs. Harewood?'

'I don't; but she is a very old friend of mamma's. But, I don't know, I think I ought to tell you, as you are going to Birchleigh, that I am going to be a governess.'

'I am very sorry to hear it,' Sir Stephen answered, from the bottom of his heart.

'Why are you sorry?' exclaimed Aimée, her whole face changing, brightening with animation, and her eyes shining with a strangely-beau-

tiful light. 'I think it such a thing to be thankful for to be able to go and work for my dear father and mother!' And then, ashamed of having so spoken to a stranger, she looked down and half-turned away, blushing and looking so lovely that Sir Stephen felt inclined to fall on his knees and then and there implore her to give him the right to protect her from all trouble and sorrow for the future. This, however, was too much of a good thing, so he rushed to the other extreme, turned away from her, and took up the 'Times' again, leaving Aimée wondering if she had said anything to annoy him. Her conscience felt clear, and she took out the book her father had given her to enliven the journey; and when Sir Stephen threw down his newspaper in disgust she was reading, or pretending to read, so intently that he had no pretext for disturbing her till they stopped at X—, where they had to change carriages. Here Aimée was most grateful to him; he was so kind looking after her and her small amount of luggage, and taking care of her as they crossed the wide expanse of rail on their way to the other train, where, as a matter of course, he got into the same carriage with her.

He found it impossible, though, to renew the conversation. Aimée was afraid her mother would not approve of her having talked to a stranger, even though it was such a stranger as Sir Stephen Dashwood, and she resolved to speak no more to him.

III.

Very, comparatively, stupid Sir Stephen found the rest of the journey, and was very glad to reach the Birchleigh Station, where a servant was waiting, who announced that Mrs. Harewood was waiting for Miss Barlow.

She was driving herself in a low pony carriage, and greeted Aimée most cordially. 'I drove over for you myself, because I thought it would be less formidable for you than arriving alone. Sir Stephen, you must try to find room in the

dog-cart. Charles expected you by the next train.'

'I found this train suited me better. I shall enjoy the walk to Birchleigh, thanks. What time, though, do you dine?'

'Eight; so you have plenty of time, unless you lose your way in the dark. An revoir!' And the spirited little ponies started briskly homewards.

Aimée was at once fascinated by Mrs. Harewood. She looked so sunnily bright and young, that it seemed incredible she could be her mother's contemporary.

'Dear little thing!' she began, in her rich, sweet voice, as they drove off; 'your mother tells me this is the first time you have left home alone. I hope you will try to be happy with us. You know, long ago, your dear mother was my greatest friend.'

Mrs. Harewood sighed, and then went on, 'I never can persuade her to come and see me now.'

'Oh, mamma never leaves home, even for a day!' exclaimed Aimée. 'She is much too busy.'

Mrs. Harewood mused on the different lives of herself and her friend; then, as the thought returned to her, she asked, 'Do you know Sir Stephen Dashwood well?'

'I never saw him till to-day. He knows papa.'

'He's still rather young to chaperone young ladies,' thought Mrs. Harewood; and wishing to get to the bottom of the mystery, if mystery there were, she continued—

'Mrs. Barlow asked him to take care of you?'

'No. He got into the same carriage at M—. He told me himself who he was.'

Mrs. Harewood thought all might not be going well for Miss Ashley, but she did not like to commence her acquaintance with Aimée by a lecture on propriety of behaviour, and therefore devoted herself to amusing her guest by light talk on unimportant subjects.

It seemed a long while before they reached Birchleigh to Aimée, and she was very glad when Mrs. Harewood led her into the morning room, looking so bright and cheery

after the twilight and drizzling rain outside. A young girl rose from a low easy-chair as they entered.

'Mary, darling, here is Miss Barlow. Aimée, I think we must call you, dear. Do give her some tea quickly. We are cold and wet. I suppose the Ashleys are not come?'

'No, mamma, but they ought to be here now. Is Sir Stephen come?'

'Yes, but he would walk. I hope he will enjoy this wet evening. How do you do, dear Mrs. Ashley?'

Thereupon ensued great kissing and hand-shaking as the five Ashleys entered. Then the confusion subsided. Mary poured out tea for the two ladies. Mr. Ashley talked county talk to Mrs. Harewood. Jack, who was bashful, sat with his eyes fixed on the ground, and Willie, who was forward, stared at Aimée, who sat silently thinking of Sir Stephen out in the rain, and wishing he would arrive and protect her. She heard a heavy tread at last, and eagerly looked towards the door, but it was only Mr. Harewood, who shook hands with her cordially, and seemed as pleasantly kind as his wife.

Something was said about rooms, and Mrs. Ashley and her daughter rose. 'Come, Aimée,' said Mary; and to her great joy the door closed between her and Willie's inquisitive eyes.

The room assigned to her was close to Mary Harewood's, who was most kind in sending her maid; and very lovely Aimée looked as she went down stairs in her simple white dress, and great trepidation at the thought of 'dining down stairs.'

Thirty people staying in the house, Mary said. The eldest and much-brought-forward daughter of a very worldly mother, Mary was as calm and self-possessed as if she had been 'out' for years, and could not in the least understand Aimée's fears, or her pitiful entreaties to be allowed to drink tea with the children. So, terribly frightened, she entered the huge drawing-room, bewildered to see so many people and hear so little noise. Several gentle-

men came forward to speak to Miss Harewood, and Aimée stood alone, feeling very wretched, but timidly raising her eyes now and then to look, in vain, for Sir Stephen.

At length dinner was announced, and after a little waiting Aimée was assigned to Jack Ashley, who, being quite as shy as herself, conducted her in solemn silence down the great staircase, across the great hall, and into the great dining-room, where, still in solemn silence, they took their seats.

Aimée had never seen such a sight before. The beautiful and rare fruit and flowers, the graceful ferns, the exquisite china and costly plate, formed a contrast to the meals at home. Ladies richly dressed and shining with jewels sat round the table, while, close to Aimée, was Mrs. Harewood, in pale green satin and white lace, diamonds flashing on her head and neck. Aimée felt as if she were in a dream. The scent of the flowers, the dazzling lights, the low murmur of many voices, were all mingling in confusion, and Aimée began to feel faint, when some one quietly took the empty chair at her right hand, and a low voice said, half-laughingly, 'Good evening, Miss Barlow.'

She looked round to see Sir Stephen's handsome face; but before she had time to speak Mrs. Harewood interrupted, 'Did you lose your way, Sir Stephen?'

'Of course,' he answered in a resigned tone. 'I ought to know my way by this time, but somehow in the dusk I missed a turn, and only got here half an hour ago.'

'How wet you must have been! Aimée exclaimed, as Mrs. Harewood's next neighbour claimed her attention, in a voice of immense pity, which made Sir Stephen smile.

'That does not hurt much. I suppose you got here before it began?'

'It was just beginning.'

'A cold greeting! Well, how do you like Birchleigh?'

'I am frightened.'

'What of?'

'Everything. I did so beg Miss

Harewood to let me have tea in the nursery.'

'I am very glad she refused such an absurd request. But please do eat something;' for the idea of eating had not occurred to Aimée.

'Here's a bill of fare. There, I recommend that,' he continued, pointing to a long French name, which conveyed no idea to Aimée's ignorant mind. However, the dish warranted Sir Stephen's encomium, and she felt better, and very grateful to him for his kind manner to her—so grateful, that at last she said, 'You are so kind to me! I should be so miserable just now if you were not here.'

'Rather strong,' thought Sir Stephen. 'What a dear little innocent child she is!' continuing, aloud, 'I am very glad. You see I was quite right when I told you this morning we ought not to be strangers.'

'I am afraid I was very rude,' Aimée said, timidly, with a fascinating blush. 'I never travelled alone before, and I was so frightened.'

'You were not in the least rude. I am very glad we did make each other's acquaintance before we arrived here, for now I feel quite an old friend.'

'Oh, yes!' said Aimée, venturing to raise her eyes timidly to his face. 'I never can thank you enough for being so kind to me. When you see papa again he will thank you properly.'

'I am quite satisfied with your thanks for the present.'

'I shall write to mamma to-morrow, and tell her how kind you have been. And you will take care of me, please, won't you, all the time you are here?'

'With all my heart!' Sir Stephen answered with such fervour that she looked up surprised; while he wondered what there was about this timid child which had so bewitched him.

'How is the election likely to go in your part of the world, Dashwood?' here asked an old gentleman across the table, an eager politician, who seized the first pause to make this inquiry; and Mrs. Harewood, who was very political, joined

in the conversation, and for some time animated talk went on amongst the people nearest their hostess. Aimée listened eagerly, feeling proud of the way all seemed to refer to Sir Stephen, and much struck by the easy way, yet not boastfully, in which he talked of men and measures.

Much to her annoyance, Jack Ashley now took courage and made his first observation to her. It was the stock question, 'Have you come far to-day?' followed up, on her answering, 'Yes, rather,' by the usual second question in country houses, 'Did you drive?'

Aimée's answer, 'I came from M——,' surprised him, and he thought of asking if she lived in that horrid place, but thought it might be rude. So he observed, 'Very pretty plant that is.'

'Yes, very,' said Aimée, who felt more shy with this stupid boy than with Sir Stephen. She began to wonder why this was; then wished they would leave off talking politics, hoping he might in that case speak to her; then wondered if she ought to speak to Jack, but could think of nothing to say. Dinner seemed at last as if it never would end. She might have enjoyed the novel scene, however, if Jack had not been sadly on her mind, as well as her terror of the fine ladies in the drawing-room afterwards. She looked towards Jack now and then, hoping he would speak and break their stupid silence, but in vain. At last Mrs. Harewood rose. Mary's numerous young-lady friends crowded round her as soon as they were in the hall, but she smiled good-naturedly at Aimée, who had shrunk into a corner, and introduced her to one or two of them. 'Mary, how can you stay in this cold!' exclaimed Miss Ashley, after a minute or two had passed; she looked so regally handsome in her rich evening dress that Aimée hardly recognized her. 'Miss Barlow, you are shivering,' she added kindly, 'come up stairs;' and a general move was made. Miss Ashley continued to talk to Aimée. Mrs. Harewood had told her story, and Caroline felt very sorry for the

little governess. Aimée was surprised to find herself very comfortable in mind as she talked to her new friend in the stately drawing-room. The gentlemen soon came up, and Aimée felt a severe pang when Sir Stephen, without even looking at her, went to Miss Ashley and began to talk to her. It was unnecessary pain. Sir Stephen only remained the short time his intimate acquaintance with the Ashleys made almost imperative, and then moving away returned to her no more. 'My match-making mother is wrong, I suspect,' was Miss Ashley's calm reflection. Aimée had been watching them intently, with a vague hope that Sir Stephen might turn to her next, but in vain. He passed on to Mrs. Harewood, with the intention, however, of asking questions about Aimée, and went at once to his subject by saying, 'I want to know who your little *protégée* is?'

'Miss Barlow? Her father is a curate at M——. Your town, though. Did you never meet him?'

'Oh, yes! often; but I know know nothing of his family or antecedents.'

'It is a sad story. Mrs. Barlow was old Mr. Howard's only child. You must have met him at my father's. He was our next neighbour.'

'Yes, I remember seeing Miss Howard once. Is she Miss Barlow's mother?' Sir Stephen's joy at finding Aimée's mother belonged to one of the best families in England was perhaps unreasonable.

'She was a great friend of mine. In those days every one thought she would be an immense heiress. She was engaged to Mr. Barlow when they were both quite young. Mr. Howard liked him very much. He had no money, but was very clever, and Mr. Howard meant him to stand for the county as soon as he left college. In the mean time, however, he became what people call "very good," and thought it his duty to become a clergyman.'

'And Mr. Howard was furious, and refused his consent?'

'Yes. Mrs. Barlow, very rightly, I think, would not break off her

engagement, and so they married, and Mr. Howard left everything to a distant cousin.'

'Mr. Barlow looks as if life had gone hard with him.'

'Indeed it has. His health completely broke down, from over-work, a few years after their marriage, and my husband managed to get him the chaplaincy at S——. Wretched pay, but the Italian climate quite restored his health, and feeling quite well, he thought it his duty, two years ago, to take that curacy at M——.'

'I should say his health was giving way again.'

'Most likely. He is one of those good but tiresome men who ought not to marry. I have no patience with a man in his position recklessly throwing away his life with a wife and children depending on him.'

'I am afraid we are hardly good enough ourselves to understand him,' Sir Stephen answered, gravely.

'Miss Barlow told me she was going to be a governess,' he added.

'Mrs. Barlow wrote to ask me if I knew of anything for her, so I asked her to come here to meet Mrs. Danvers, and see if she would do for her little girls.'

Do. Sir Stephen felt very angry that such a word should be applied to Aimée; and then he wondered why he should care, and the answer would come, that, odd and unsuitable though it might seem, this young girl had taken the place in his heart which he had thought was left empty for ever.

While he was coming to this conclusion a round game was proposed, and he went to the youthful end of the room.

'You will play, Aimée?' asked Mary Harewood.

'I don't know how.'

'Then, I'll teach you,' said Sir Stephen. 'We'll bank together. Everlasting "Pips," I suppose, Mary?'

Very pleasant Aimée found that game, and though most of the party hated the very sight of the cards and counters, they bore their fate manfully, and the evening wore away with a fair show of mirth.

IV.

Aimée, next morning, after writing to her mother, went to Mary Harewood's room, and found her not nearly ready for breakfast. 'Do go down,' she said. 'Papa is always so fond of punctual people.'

Aimée therefore went down in much fear, and made her way to the morning room, heartily wishing herself out of it when she found it only contained Mr. Harewood, Sir Stephen, and three or four other gentlemen. The former came forward at once, and said cordially, 'I am delighted to see one punctual young lady.' But even that and Sir Stephen's kind greeting did not reassure her much, and she stood blushing and looking lovely as she answered Mr. Harewood in monosyllables, while Sir Stephen gazed at her with silent admiration.

Only a few minutes passed, though they seemed ages to Aimée, and then Mrs. Harewood entered, and the small party adjourned to breakfast.

One after another the rest came in — some looking injured, some sulky; and as they sat round the table making futile attempts at conversation they formed a proof, if proof were needed, of the superiority of the French mode of life.

'Do make haste, Stephen,' Mr. Harewood said at last to Sir Stephen, who was dawdling over his breakfast, and devoting most of his time to moody meditation, having been foiled in his attempt to sit next Aimée. 'Do make haste, we must start at eleven.'

'I think I shall stay at home.'

'Stay at home! Our crack shot! I beg your pardon, but, unless you have some good reason, shoot you must,' answered his host, in agony at the thought of the probable deficit in his bag that day.

Good reason Sir Stephen had, but he was not able to give it, so he answered carelessly, 'Of course I'll go, if you care about it.' And he saw a cloud of sorrow pass over a little face opposite him, and thought how dear and innocent it was, without an idea of hiding any emotion. Sir Stephen was hopelessly in love!

Very long the day seemed to Aimée. She sat in the morning room, looking at books, wondering where all the ladies were, and why the few who came and went never spoke to her. There were no gentlemen at luncheon, save one or two elderly bores. Afterwards riding, driving, walking. Aimée walked, and though the Birchleigh woods were famous for their beauty, found it dull work, for her two friends Mary Harewood and Miss Ashley were riding, and the people who walked did not trouble themselves to talk to her. Then they came in and had tea, after which, as after breakfast, the ladies vanished, and Aimée was left alone with two of the bores, which so alarmed her that she fled to her room with a book, and almost cried at the thought that now she should not see Sir Stephen till dinner-time.

The long time of waiting till then was broken by Mrs. Harewood sending for her to her boudoir, and talking to her for some time very kindly. She went down to the drawing-room in good time, but, though Sir Stephen was there before her, he was talking to an old lady, and could not get away, much as he wished it. At dinner they were placed far apart, and with a thick bush between them. Aimée mentally called it a horrid old thing, and once tried to look round it, but meeting Sir Stephen's eyes endeavouring to do the same, she blushed violently, and did not repeat the attempt. A young man a little less stupid than Jack Ashley had taken her in, and they got on pretty well.

After dinner Sir Stephen meant to make up for lost time, but he was intercepted on his way, and then made to play at whist.

She cried that night, and wondered why in a country house gentlemen should be so carefully kept away from the ladies. It never occurred to her to wonder why she cared so much about Sir Stephen. He seemed her one friend in that great house, and she thought of nothing more.

The next morning she was too shy to go down till Mary was

ready, and then it was so late that most of the gentlemen were gone out shooting, and Sir Stephen had again been impressed.

The day passed much in the same way as the day before, save that Aimée was much pleased and amused by being allowed to help to arrange and ornament the house for the evening's dance.

After tea Miss Ashley was summoned to her mother's room.

'Sit down, Caroline,' said Mrs. Ashley, as her daughter stood impatiently before her.

'I really can't stay, mamma. Mrs. Harewood wishes some of the flowers to be altered in the ball-room, and Mary asked me to help her.'

'They must manage without you, my dear, for a little.'

The tone was so serious that Caroline saw no help for it, and drew a comfortable arm-chair to the fire.

'You are twenty-six, my dear.'

'Oh, I know that.'

'Hush, Caroline. I wish to speak seriously to you on a subject I know you dislike. But how can I avoid doing it, when I see you deliberately throwing away such a chance of happiness?'

'I beg your pardon, mamma, if you mean Sir Stephen Dashwood. It's the greatest nonsense I ever heard. He does not care for me in the least.'

'He does. But he cannot show it while your manner to him is so cold.'

'He's desperately in love with Miss Barlow, so that settles the question.'

'Impossible! that sort of thing never happened out of a novel!'

'I believe many poor governesses do delude themselves with wild ideas of romantic heroes, but Miss Barlow is very different. She is going into the world bravely, without any nonsense in her head, and I think she will be rewarded at once by meeting a sensible man who can see and appreciate the beauty of her character.'

Mrs. Ashley was not in the least touched by this outburst.

'I don't believe it, she said.

'Sir Stephen is far too much a man of the world to do anything so foolish.'

'I don't think it foolish. But I really cannot stay any longer. I am sick of Sir Stephen's name.' And Caroline made good her retreat at last.

Mrs. Ashley, in wild despair, hurried to Mrs. Harewood's boudoir.

'Oh, my dear Mrs. Harewood, such dreadful news! Caroline tells me Sir Stephen is in love with Miss Barlow.'

'What nonsense!' Mrs. Harewood calmly answered, adding, rather sharply, 'How came she to say anything on such a subject?'

'Why her manner to him is so cold, I thought it better to speak to her before to-night, and then she said that.'

'The idea is absurd. He has far too much sense even to have thought of anything so ridiculous.'

Mrs. Harewood spoke severely, and looked so haughty and unsympathetic that Mrs. Ashley left the room in despair, feeling rather ashamed, and not in the least convinced.

Down stairs Mary, Caroline, Aimée, and one or two favoured young ladies were superintending, and, indeed, working hard themselves, in the rearrangement of the flowers Mrs. Harewood had desired. Very lovely the room looked when it was all done, and then Caroline, prompted by some kindly impulse, turned to Aimée and asked, 'What are you going to wear to-night?'

'My clean white muslin. I have nothing else,' Aimée answered; adding, timidly, 'Do you think—is it very dreadful to wear a high dress?'

Caroline laughed good-naturedly. 'No, indeed; you will only look as if you were not out.'

'And, please—you are so kind—do you think I might have some flowers for my hair? I was afraid to ask Miss Harewood.'

'Certainly. I'll manage that, and bring them to your room and put them in for you, if you like.'

Aimée's thanks were fervent.

She did not speak to Sir Stephen either before or during dinner; but

the moment she entered the ball-room he came up to her.

She really looked very beautiful. The simple white dress suited her quiet style of beauty, and her hair did credit to Miss Ashley, who had felt a little sad, and very much amused, as she wreathed those white roses for her unsuspecting rival.

Aimée had seated herself on a sofa by her side now, and Mrs. Ashley, who was close to her daughter, saw with horror that Sir Stephen drew a chair behind the sofa, and half turning his back on Caroline, began to talk to Aimée, and in such a low voice that she could not hear what he said, which was a great aggravation.

The first thing he did was to give Aimée a card, saying, 'I am so glad Mary insisted on having cards, to be quite like a "real ball." Now, may I put my name down?'

He held out his hand and took it as he spoke, and when he restored it Aimée was surprised to see how often he had written his name.

'You do not think it too many, I hope?' he asked, as he saw her expression.

'I did not know if it was right. This is my first ball, you know. Is it right?' she asked, suddenly, looking him full in the face.

'Quite,' he answered, adding to himself, 'I will make it so.'

'How little we have seen of each other the last few days!' he continued, after looking round and seeing Miss Ashley was talking to some one. 'I am afraid I have not been of much use to you.'

'I think it is very stupid of gentlemen to shoot all day,' Aimée answered, candidly.

'Not always. But I did think it a horrid bore to-day and yesterday,' he said, in a marked tone that Aimée was too ignorant to appreciate.

'To-morrow, I believe, the ladies are coming out to lunch with us, so that will be a degree better. And, alas! it is my last day, for I find I must go home on Friday.'

This was quite true, but he mentioned it now to see how Aimée would take it.

Tears dimmed her eyes for a moment, but she said bravely, 'I am so sorry: I shall miss you so much.'

'Don't let's think of it now. To-night, happily, I need not play at whist, so I mean to enjoy myself. Will you come? They are going to begin the first dance.'

That night was strange bliss to Aimée. She danced beautifully; and Sir Stephen, who had done the same in his early youth, found he had not forgotten the art.

Dance followed dance. Sir Stephen cast all scruples to the wind, and Aimée, childishly trustful in him, made no remonstrance.

Of course they were remarked. Mrs. Ashley, before much time had passed, came eagerly to Mrs. Harewood. 'It is just as I told you! He has danced three times with her already!'

'Who is "he"?' asked Mrs. Harewood, rather provokingly.

'Sir Stephen Dashwood, of course.'

'Oh! And "she"?'

'Why, of course, Miss Barlow.'

'Three times already! that is rather strong.' And with a laugh she turned to some one else.

However, she kept her eye on them, and was relieved to see Sir Stephen dancing with Miss Ashley. That did not last long, and she saw him dancing again and again with Aimée. Then at last they went to supper together, and Mrs. Harewood thought it was quite time to put a stop to it. As soon as Aimée returned to her neighbourhood, she went to her, and said, 'Aimée, my dear, you must not dance any more with Sir Stephen Dashwood. You need not blush so much; I dare say you did not know it was wrong to make yourself so conspicuous.'

'But,' faltered Aimée, 'I am engaged to him for several more dances.'

'You must make some excuse. You cannot dance with him any more. Don't look so wretched, poor child; of course you knew no better, and I shall speak to him to-morrow.'

This promise did not console Aimée in the least, and she stood, naturally wishing that the floor

would open and swallow her and her confusion. She could not fly to take refuge in her room, for in the doorway she saw Sir Stephen, and she dare not pass him. So she stayed where she was, trying hard not to cry, and shrinking as much as she could behind a stand of flowers. She heard a glorious valse begin, and her heart beat fast as she wondered whether he would find her, and what he would say. Mrs. Harewood must be right, but how could Sir Stephen be wrong? While pondering over this dilemma, she heard his well-known voice.

'I have found you at last! Our valse is half over. Why, what's the matter?'

For a moment Aimée could not speak: then she gasped out, 'Mrs. Harewood said I was not to dance with you any more. She said it was wrong. I am very sorry.'

'Aimée, my darling! Wrong! I was wrong to expose you to this! I ought to have spoken sooner. Don't you know how I love you? Don't you know that my one wish is that you should be my wife?'

At this moment Sir Stephen was nearly knocked down by a couple of very energetic dancers; and while he was receiving abject apologies, Mrs. Harewood, who had seen him find Aimée, came up, and in a sweet but decided voice begged he would dance with a certain hideous young lady of high rank, who had been much neglected during the evening.

Sir Stephen could but comply, and Aimée, seizing her opportunity, made her way down the room, seeing no one, hearing no one, and then flying, as if for her life, up the staircase and through the passages to her room, when she locked the door and threw herself on the sofa, crying bitterly.

What could it mean? Did Sir Stephen mean that he wished to marry her? She wiped away her tears, and tried to think seriously. She liked him very much, certainly *very* much, but he was so old, and she had never thought of the possibility of such a thing; indeed, poor child, she had never thought of marrying any one, save in a vague childish way, and the last year or

two she had resolutely looked forward to a long life of governing. It might be possible he meant nothing after all, she thought at last. She would write and tell her mother. And soothed by this thought she fell asleep. She was roused by the great noise made by the rest of the world in coming up-stairs, and wisely went to bed without tormenting herself by more thought over her difficulties.

The next morning the sun was shining brightly when she woke, and Mary Harewood stood by her side in the freshest of morning dresses. Aimée sprang up in alarm, asking what time it was.

'Eleven. I was down in time this morning. I can always get up after a dance.'

'What shall I do?' Aimée asked, in terror, for at home it was a crime of the first magnitude to be late for breakfast.

'Do? why get up. Lots of people are not down yet. Only make haste if you want to lunch with the gentlemen. They are gone ages ago, and we are to start at half-past twelve.'

V.

Mrs. Harewood had kept her word as to speaking to Sir Stephen. As she was going up-stairs that night she met him, and said, 'I want to speak to you. I know you keep early hours, so can you come to my boudoir before breakfast?'

'Certainly. I should like to speak to you at once, but I suppose it would be too much to ask?'

'I am afraid I must ask you to wait a few hours. I am only sorry the time is so short,' Mrs. Harewood said, laughing. 'I really cannot keep awake any longer, so au revoir,' and she passed on.

Sir Stephen went to his room rather unhappy. He was not as conceited as most men, who think they have only to ask and have, and he really feared very much that unworldly little Aimée might refuse him. So next morning found him in the boudoir, very doubtful and miserable, and angry with himself

or the position he found himself in.

Mrs. Harewood did not keep him waiting long, and rushed into her subject at once, saying, in the way she was so fond of, half-jest, half-earnest, 'I am very angry with you for the disgraceful way you flirted with Miss Barlow last night.'

'And I am very angry with you for speaking to her on the subject,' Sir Stephen answered, in the same tone.

'What! She told you! However, it is all the same. Really, Sir Stephen, it was very wrong of you. I do not much mind people flirting with girls who know what it's worth, but it is not fair on poor little Aimée, and I must beg you will behave differently to her in future.'

'I hope to do so,' he answered, with a smile, and then a sigh.

Mrs. Harewood looked perplexed. 'I don't know what you mean. There is no need for you to speak to her at all. Indeed if you were not going away to-morrow, I think I should send her to the nursery with the children.'

'I hope to stay a little longer, if you will *all* let me.'

'I shall be most happy, only you must promise not to flirt with Aimée.'

'I promise that solemnly. Dear Mrs. Harewood, I can quite believe I behaved disgracefully. I did not know what I was doing. You will understand when I tell you, I asked Miss Barlow last night to be my wife, but I have not been answered yet.'

Mrs. Harewood sprang from her chair in astonishment. 'Aimée!' was all she could say.

'Yes.'

'But you don't know her!'

'It does not take long to know some people. The look in her eyes is almost enough. And to see that little darling meaning to go out into the world so bravely!' He stopped abruptly, and then went on, 'I will spare you a rhapsody. My mind is quite made up. If she refuses me, which I honestly think very likely, I shall of course go away to-morrow, and the subject need never be

mentioned again; unless there is any gossip about her. Will she come out to luncheon to-day?'

'I should think so as Mary is going.'

'Then I shall try to speak to her then. I need not keep you any longer.'

'No, stop, please. It would be charming for Aimée, but have you thought enough about yourself. Lady Dashwood—'

'Is only too anxious to see me married to any one, and there is no one I need consider but her. I know I am too old for Aimée, but if she will have me, I shall try to prevent her ever finding it out.'

'It is ridiculous! She is only seventeen.'

'We could wait for a year or two, if she will have me, as I said before.'

'She would be mad to refuse you! Why they have hardly anything to live on!'

'Pardon me, Mrs. Harewood,' answered Sir Stephen, with a slightly scornful accent, 'you look at the subject from a worldly point of view; I am sure Miss Barlow would allow nothing of that sort to weigh with her.'

Mrs. Harewood only looked incredulous.

'I beg you will not mention the subject to her, or any one, till I have her answer.'

'Certainly not. She is a dear little thing, only you must pardon me for not thinking her quite good enough for you.' And so they went to breakfast very good friends.

Sir Stephen of course looked in vain for Aimée that morning, and if she could have had her own way he would not have seen her at luncheon. She felt so shy that she begged to be left at home, but Mrs. Harewood told her to go so peremptorily that she dared not refuse.

She spent the long drive in perplexed thought, and naturally enough could come to no conclusion, only she was inclined to think somehow it must be nonsense.

She could not help blushing as Sir Stephen came forward to help her out of the waggonette, and sprang out so quickly to avoid him,

that she nearly fell. Her one idea now was to keep out of his way, and by joining Miss Ashley in the walk through the woods quite succeeded for the moment.

At luncheon he almost managed to sit next her, but she was too quick and moved away, and he did not like to follow her.

Afterwards the ladies were to walk a little way to see some of the shooting, and a discussion arose. Mrs. Ashley and one or two other ladies were afraid of the fatigue, and it was proposed they should return home at once.

Sir Stephen, in alarm, walked across to Aimée. 'You are coming with us?'

'Thank you. I think I would rather go home.'

'*Pléuse come.*' He spoke as persuasively as he dared, for they were surrounded by people, and he was afraid of exciting remark.

'Thank you very much, but indeed I would rather go home!' Poor child, she did not know it was her deep love for him that made her long to fly from him, nor could she guess how he would misunderstand her. His tone changed.

'Pray go, if you prefer it,' he answered, very gravely; 'let me take your cloak.' And with a stern, set face, he followed her to the carriage in silence.

Aimée felt very miserable, and could hardly answer the old ladies' well-meaning attempts at conversation. Arrived at Birchleigh she went to her room and spent her time in tears, and trying to finish her letter to her mother.

Sir Stephen was very surly all the afternoon, shot atrociously, and felt savage at being waylaid by Mrs. Harewood, as he passed her boudoir.

'I want to speak to you.'

'There is nothing to speak about,' he answered, shortly, and, it must be confessed, rudely.

'Do you mean she has refused you?'

'As good as; she would not let me speak to her.'

Mrs. Harewood laughed. 'How foolish you men are! I saw her avoiding you. If she had wished to refuse you she would have made

an opportunity and got it over. It's quite true, I believe, that men cannot understand the shyness of true love. If a girl is really and properly in love I think she would do anything rather than show it.'

'But I spoke to her last night.'

'She may think it too good to be true! Now if you will be rational and wait here, I will send for her, and I know it will be all right.'

Sir Stephen hesitated. 'You will not prepare her.'

'No, you tiresome man! I shall only say I want her to come here.'

'Very well. But if she refuses me I shall be very angry with you, for I am quite resigned to my fate.'

'So it seems,' Mrs. Harewood answered, satirically. 'Now sit down and be patient for a few minutes, and I will send for her.'

Aimée was distressed at the prospect of having to face Mrs. Harewood so soon, but she could not refuse, and with a beating heart she knocked at the boudoir door. No one answered, and she went in. The room was almost dark after the brilliantly-lighted hall. The one lamp was shaded, and only cast a pink radiance over Mrs. Harewood's writing-table, while the fire-light failed to reach the face of a man sitting at the other side of the room.

She thought it was Mr. Harewood, and walked to the fire, expecting him to speak to her, but started back as Sir Stephen Dashwood got up, only saying, 'Aimée,' in rather a husky voice.

Her impulse was to run away, but she found she could not move. They stood silent together for a moment, then he began in a low voice—

'Your manner to me to-day has made me very unhappy. Perhaps you did not understand me last night?' He paused, but she did not speak, and he added, very quietly, 'Will you be my wife?'

Still no answer.

'Aimée, speak to me. If you do not care for me, in pity say so.'

Only silence.

'Aimée, what does this mean?' He came closer as he spoke, and took her passive hand in his.



A LEAF FROM AN OLD SKETCH BOOK.

Drawn by Linley Sambourne.



THE CENSOR'S DREAM (AFTER...

Drawn by



A COURSE OF PANTOMIMES).

d Thompson.



A SKETCH FROM THE PARISIAN STAGE.

That seemed to give her power to speak, and her words came in a confused torrent.

'I don't know—I've been thinking—I like you very much—but I am not good enough—and I don't know what mamma would say.'

Somehow this vague answer seemed to satisfy Sir Stephen, and Aimée found herself cut short in a way which confused her more than ever.

'Indeed—indeed I am not good enough, I am so young and foolish,' she said, as soon as he paused in his expressions of happiness.

'We will write and ask Mrs. Barlow's opinion,' he answered, smiling; 'I think she will not be hardhearted. You *really* do care, my darling, for a stupid old man like me?'

'Oh, yes. Why do you ask? You know it,' Aimée answered, almost inaudibly.

'May I come in? it is long past

dressing-time,' said Mrs. Harewood, entering the room.

'Please,' Sir Stephen answered, in a much more cheerful tone than when he had last spoken to her. 'I wanted to see you, to say, that if you will allow me to stay here, I shall let my affairs at home take care of themselves to-morrow.'

Mr. and Mrs. Barlow were delighted that their daughter should marry such an excellently good man; which really did seem to them more important than his houses and lands, or even the country living, which Mr. Barlow's failing health made him thankfully accept.

As to Sir Stephen and Aimée, I think we have seen enough of them, in these few days, to prophesy with safety, that, like people in fairy tales, they will live happily ever afterwards.



HOW THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE REALLY DID RUN SMOOTH.

By *Storp.*

MY father was laudably anxious that I should marry. It is not a feeling which, as a rule, is very common with the revered authors of our existence, and it ought to be encouraged; especially when the son has nothing to live on beyond the allowance made by the relieving officer, the parental relative. But my father had himself married early, during the lifetime of my grandfather, and in his case the experiment had succeeded admirably. He had a comfortable, entailed estate, and he was not one of those prodigal fathers who wish the eldest son to join them in cutting off the entail. I was disposed to be dutiful to my father, and theoretically I did not object to the theory of connubiality. But matrimony was a subject on which my mind was in a peculiarly wavering and unsettled condition. A long procession of divinities had fled through the vacant chambers of my heart, and none had succeeded in taking up a permanent lodgment there. Kate, Harriette, and Julia had each their charms, which were fairly appreciated by my candid mind; and often Julia the Second, and Kate the Second, and Kate the Third had succeeded in their brief reign as the sovereigns of my affections. From these facts it will be perceived I was yet heart-whole, and had not seriously suffered in these slight skirmishes with the light artillery of Dan Cupid. It was a reproach against a great political philosopher that he gave up to party what was meant for mankind. The notion of following that example—of giving up to one girl what was meant for womankind altogether—appeared to me to be exceedingly unphilosophical.

Lawford of Exeter Coll. and I had gone out for a long excursion in the Lakes. Now there is nothing like mountaineering to do away with any lingering love weaknesses. We had been doing some of the

English and afterwards the Scottish mountains. You take your knapsack on your back, swing your field-glass over your shoulder, have your pocket-flask, compass, and wraps in good order. Then you go across the heather, and climb mountains, and if you don't get over a prodigious number of miles in the course of the expedition, you have to sleep in the open air on a mountain; which you don't greatly mind for once or twice in a way. I did mind it considerably, however, when we came over Ben Lomond one night, and first mist, then rain, then sleet came down furiously. Lawford and I had been discussing our love affairs, a topic of which he was very fond; and being hopelessly engaged himself, he exhorted me to 'concentrate my affections,' as he was pleased to express himself. He had certainly shown me a good example, as his engagement dated back from his first Long Vacation, and I had already taken my degree. Moreover, Lawford had engaged himself on expectations so exceedingly indefinite that there never appeared the least chance of their being realized; whereas my paternal acres seemed imperatively to demand a future mistress. I said I only waited for my fate, but the Periodic maidens of the day were little suited to my taste. Lawford became weakly eloquent on the subject, as his manner was; in a way, indeed, that seemed slightly nauseating to one of my athletic, muscular tastes. But the mist, the rain, the sleet certainly cleaned the nonsense out of our heads, and we pushed on very rapidly towards our inn. In the darkness we had long lost our footpath, but, guided by the distant lights at the inn, we went at it helter-skelter across country, half wading through a river and tumbling through a waterfall, and in a very dilapidated condition we tumbled into the hostel. The house was very full, and our modest request for beds was treated

with as much dignified disdain as if we were imploring them to perform an act of charity. At last we were allotted a double-bedded room in the garret, No. 123, which we might either take, or swim across the lake—for the last steamer had left—to another inn. As our inn professed to make up 130 beds, it became a matter of lively speculation to the inquiring mind where the other seven beds or bedrooms could be found. The only hypothesis that suited the case was that beds were made up on the landings of the stairs—an idea in which we were forced to acquiesce for the want of a better.

When we came down into the large coffee-room of the hotel, we found it completely crowded with thirsting and hungering guests. The steamer had been late, and a large dinner had been laid out, and seats eagerly appropriated. Good cheer and good fellowship were the order of the day. To say the truth, I was a little tired of Lawford. He rather overdid, I thought, that story of his Sophia, and the hopes, joys, and anticipations that belonged to the subject. In all the conversational parts of the room the empty chairs were invidiously leaning forward in token that they were engaged.

'Just like my luck,' said Lawford. 'We shall be pushed into the uttermost corner, whence we shall be served last, and get everything cold.'

Confirmatory of this remark, the waiter at this moment pointed out a large table, at a distant part of the room, and stretching to the end. Lawford literally went to the wall, and I came next to him. Next to me were three vacant chairs. There was tea laid in front of these chairs, and it somehow happened—a course unusual for me—that I began to speculate who their occupants would be.

'I hope it will be no more love-sick undergraduates, pretending to read and to mountaineer, but only spooning away their time. Or some men of the Alpine Club, sneering at Ben Lomond because, forsooth, they once did Monte Rosa! Or per-

haps some wandering parsons, giving themselves intellectual airs like the fellows of Trinity, or perhaps have come away from their flat parishes in the midland counties, and have never seen a lake or a mountain before. Or most likely a Scotch bailie, who picks up gold in Glasgow, and comes here to spend it, with his high cheek-boned wife and daughter. Or some dilapidated pedestrians, like ourselves; well, that would be better than the city dandies who have just walked out of their handboxes.'

While I was thus musing, and summing up some recent experiences, the door of the coffee-room opened, and presently a murmur of surprise and admiration ran round the room, as a gentleman and two ladies entered. It is a well-known fact, that when Professor Wilson and his future wife entered a public room together, they were both so remarkably handsome, that the gentlemen in the room rose up and gave them a hearty cheer. There was no ovation now, but certainly every eye seemed to follow this beautiful girl and her distinguished-looking parents as they proceeded up the room.

'What an angel from heaven!' whispered Lawford to me.

Lawford prides himself on being a good describer of female beauty, which I acknowledge is not at all my rôle. He continued to dilate in a style which I considered to be hardly consistent with the strict allegiance which he owed to his Sophia, on the charms of the 'Incognita.'

'What a sweep of limb!' he whispered. 'What glorious hair!—why she could sit down on it! what sapphire eyes! what a sweet, engaging expression! what perfect lips and teeth! She is the best thing I've seen on my travels!'

Compassionate reader, he was very young and still an undergraduate—having lately been plucked for 'Greats.'

I had to give Lawford a ferocious pinch, for, to my utter astonishment, the party moved towards the spot where we were sitting. The engaged chairs were for them, and—

ah me! I could scarcely believe my eyes—the fortune of war was indeed on my side—St. Incognita took her seat on the very next chair to my own.

I was astonished, confused, petrified. Had a celestial vision appeared to me I could hardly have been in such sudden awe and gladness. I felt instantaneously that I could do anything for her, that any Knight of the Round Table ever did for any of Mr. Tennyson's heroines. I would walk fifty miles for her slightest guerdon; wait twenty years for her; immolate Lawford as Geraint did Earl Doorm; take to a profession and be at the end of it in no time. Everybody was avenged, all of a sudden. The former triflers with my heart were a spectral crew who had at once vanished into thin air. To quote a saying which I had often laughed at as absurd 'I had fallen in love at first sight.'

Incognita was little conscious of the war and tumult which raged within the sedate whiskered individual by her side. She seemed, indeed, altogether unconscious of the personal claims of that gentleman. Lawford was a little put out, and began to tire me with trite conversational queries, but I only gave crooked answers to his cross-questions. I was morosely occupied with my dinner, but listened anxiously to hear the first angelic tones of what I felt must be an angelic voice.

The angelic voice spoke at last. Obeying, I suppose, some sign unseen by me, a waiter approached her, and, putting her tea-cup aside, she said, in a firm but decided tone—

'Beer and cayenne pepper.'

I confess I was disappointed, I might almost say, disgusted. The first serene accents of my divinity ought not to have related to the vulgar wants of her corporeal vestiture. She also, I observed with regret, drank her beer and consumed a minute portion of cayenne pepper. I looked at her, in a severely critical frame of mind, hoping to find blemishes which had eluded my first observation. But it could not be done. The lips were

coral, the teeth pearls, the eyes sapphires, the brow marble, the hair gold. 'Ah,' I thought, 'what a glorious casket Nature can bestow on the paltriest minds! Such a perfect head, and she talk of beer and cayenne pepper!'

I finished my dinner, without having any precise notion of what I might be eating. The dart was in my side, and I could only wriggle and writhe under a sweet sudden anguish.

They were talking—one could not help overhearing what these people said—about going on to the Troasachs. The good people were a little confused in their geography. I briefly told them what was their best way from the point where they were. I was, somehow or other, rather agitated, and I believe my voice was both low and indistinct. I had a dry reply from the father, and no notice at all from the young lady, and for a few minutes I lapsed into an internal rage.

Suddenly the sapphire eyes, in their full splendour, were turned upon me. Oh, those eyes!

'Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their place till they return.'

And then some clear, courteous words were addressed to me on the one subject on which I could speak rather well, the mountains. But I instinctively felt that I was talking in a very stupid and inexpressive way, that did no justice to my considerable natural ability. Lawford, however, was able to talk volubly and loudly—that was certainly an advantage from his being anchored permanently to a Sophia—and he somehow contrived to give the idea that he had performed prodigies of valour on the Scottish hills. The wretch! and I had been obliged to act as guide throughout, and wait for him half a dozen times, and lend him an arm, and replenish his flask, and pick him out of the river. I denounced him in my heart as an impostor, and felt very much inclined to rise up and denounce him publicly. Still I had a little chat with Incognita in the intervals permitted by his declamatory conversation with the old people. She

had all my favourite tastes. She loved Millais, she read 'London Society,' she knew Tennyson by heart, she was very fond of the Opera, but she had only been there twice, she was passionately attached to cathedrals and to cathedral music, very fond of Rotten Row, but had only been there three times. And then the full truth came out. She had only left school at the beginning of that very summer. Her father and mother, from whom she had been separated for many years, had only returned from India two months before she had left school to live with them, and to be happy for ever afterwards. Of course she would have masters still for Italian, music, and her water-colours. It was so delightful to go about with papa and mamma. They had had a few weeks in London after she had left her school at Brighton, and since then they had been travelling about. They had finished with the English lakes, and were now going through the Scotch lakes. I thought the coincidence was remarkable—but in reality it was commonplace enough—that was precisely my own line of tour. It was the pleasant, happy talk of the free, liberated school-girl budding into the woman; and the bright Incognita's real name was Clara, which exactly suited her freshness and her beauty.

Still I owned that the beer and the cayenne pepper was a miserable drawback. But it was destined that even in this respect my dissatisfaction should receive considerable alleviation. For it really appeared that this heroic girl had been that very day to the summit of Ben Lomond. Being

'Not too good
For human nature's common food.'

I owned to myself that she was quite entitled to her chop and her glass of beer, and even, if she so wished, to such fiery condiment as cayenne pepper. Still even on this point, after a long and anxious discussion, Lawford greatly relieved my mind. For he asserted in most unequivocal terms that he had heard the mother counselling beer and cayenne pepper to the young lady,

who was simply repeating the mother's words to the servant who was attending her. Certainly a most disproportioned amount of disquietude was excited in my mind by the bitter beer and the red pepper.

In the course of the two or three hours passed in the coffee-room, I had ascertained that Clara Benyon and her parents were going on by steamer to Tarbert, and thence to Loch Long. Our own line of travel had been different—to get to Inver-snaid and go on by coach to Loch Katrine. Accordingly, when Lawford and I were boxed up together in that hideous double-bedded garret, I had to indoctrinate Lawford that it was expedient for us to abandon all our well-arranged plans of the Trosachs, the lakes, and Blair Athol, and go direct west, a plan which, after due consideration, we had abandoned. I did not wish to be discourteous to Lawford, and strove to render his disposition amenable to argument. Eventually, however, after clenching my argument by stating that I at least intended to cross Loch Lomond, he branded me as a man not knowing his own mind, and went to sleep in a state of sulky acquiescence.

I strolled on the lawn, watching the water, and idly flinging pebbles on the mimic waves. Somehow or other I felt very happy. I seemed to be living a fresher, fuller life. There was a sort of kindness to me in the air, the sunlight, and the water; and when I saw Clara in her morning dress coming out upon the lawn, somehow there seemed to be no strangeness in it. I almost expected that we should be calling each other by our Christian names. There seemed to be a familiarity and old-worldness about our position; that this was a fateful hour, for which I had always lived, and towards the bringing about of which all sorts of events had concurred.

'The steamer goes at a quarter past ten,' I observed, taking out my watch; 'it is now a quarter past nine.'

'Oh, we're not going by the steamer. We have changed our minds.'

'Not going by the steamer?' I exclaimed, with a thrill of disappointment. Instantly the face of Nature seemed overcast. Shadows stole down the mountain and crept along the water. The sun lost its brightness, the lake its ripple, the birds their song.

'No,' she said. 'I have just been reading through Scott's "*Lady of the Lake*," and I have persuaded papa to go to the Trosachs and to see Ellen's Isle on Loch Katrine.'

'O varium mutabile semper,' I muttered to myself, with a reminiscence of my faint and faded scholarship. My brilliant conversation of the night before had been as nothing compared to the still potent spell of the nourished great Enchanter of the North. When she told me last night that they were going to the other side of the lake, I had at once fabricated the statement that this was also our destination. One thought, however, flashed upon my mind immediately, that it was quite competent on my part to alter my destination to suit the new circumstances. It was perhaps rather hard upon Lawford, but then Lawford must be taught to sacrifice himself upon the altar of friendship.

Lawford certainly did use strong language. He cut up exceedingly rough. He said I was using him as a mere thing and a chattel, without any respect for his own feelings, and for vile uses of my own. The purblind Lawford, after all his experience with his Sophy, not to see, as I myself was beginning to see dimly, how the land really lay. He said he had ascertained that there was only a single outside place left, and he bargained that if we did not dissolve partnership that outside ride should be reserved for him. I did not know in what way the Benyons were travelling, so I assented, not without a dark misgiving.

To my infinite chagrin the Benyons were going outside, and on that brilliant morning I was to be immured in the body of the coach. I saw that wretch Lawford climb the box, and adjust Miss Benyon's wraps and make her comfortable, with a skill doubtless derived from his intimacy with that Sophy. With many

groans I subsided into my place, having for my *vis-à-vis* a buxom countrywoman, a personal friend of the coachman's, whom he was accommodating with a lift.

I felt dreadfully disappointed. I now acknowledged to myself that I had fallen regularly in love with Clara, and it really seemed for the moment that the course of my love was running smooth.

I was musing in a lonely reverie, on the borders of slumber, when suddenly the coach stopped. I now perceived that the sky was overcast, and that rain was falling heavily.

'Sorry to trouble you, sir,' said the guard, 'but two ladies are coming inside, on account of the rain.' It was Mrs. Benyon and Clara. 'Sorry to trouble me, indeed!' I instantaneously determined to give the guard a handsome tip. 'The soft, tender, indulgent, blessed rain.'

Scarcely were they seated when the sun shone out again. I longed to tell him, like Lucifer, how I hated his beams. Clara—cruel, relentless Clara!—said they had better climb to the roof again. But her mamma—blessings on her head!—said it would be a pity to give so much trouble, and they were best as they were.

So I had them to myself, and I think we were a brilliant little party. Being in the same carriage, we desired to be mutually agreeable, and nothing occurred to interrupt the harmony of the drive. The mother was a beautiful old lady. I was almost as much in love with her as I was with her daughter. It was a happy drive. I was wrapt in Elysium. I heard divine music, I saw heavenly eyes and an angelic face.

At Invernaid I happened to recollect some lines that Wordsworth composed on a Highland lassie there. The old lady had some faint recollection of them, and asked me what I knew.

I said the piece was rather long, and I only recollected the first few and the last few lines. And I said—

'The lines are entitled "*To a Highland Girl, at Inversneyde upon Loch Lomond*;" the very spot where we have been this morning.'

'How interesting!' said Clara. 'Goon.'

'It is so delightful to have such a memory,' said the kind old lady.

I quoted from the poet, not quite accurately, I candidly confess, but slightly garbling my author, that the poet should say the very words that I wished to say. I felt very melancholy at the thought that I could not always be sacrificing the Exeter man at the altar of friendship, and go roaming about the world, in a miscellaneous sort of way, after these people. I think I showed a little emotion in my voice, and gazed on Clara stedfastly as I said—

'Sweet Highland girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower.
I bless thee, vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart;
God shield thee to thy latest years,
That neither know I nor thy peers,
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.'

'With earnest feelings I shall pray
For thee when I am far away.
For never saw I mien nor face
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense,
Ripening in perfect innocence.'

'What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful?
O happy pleasure! live to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell;
Adopt thy homely ways and dress,
A shepherd, thou a shepherdess.'

I certainly thought the quotation—except perhaps the last line but one—a happy one, and I flattered myself that my mode of bringing it out was equivalent to a declaration. And for the first time I thought I saw a conscious blush and a slight confusion on the charming face of the young beauty.

Without the slightest touch of *mauvais honte*, I followed them to the hotel which they pronounced for, to the distraction of Lawford, who had mentally determined upon the opposition establishment.

At this hotel, almost as soon as we entered, people pertinaciously requested us to write our name in the Visitors' Book. I did so with impatience, as this writing of autographs always seemed to me a bore and a piece of nonsense. However, in a couple of minutes we were immortally embalmed on the books of the establishment—

'John Lawford, Exeter College, Oxford.'

'Charles Rolfe, Donnerdale Place, Shropshire.'

Scarcely had I written my name and laid down the pen, when I felt my hand grasped by old Benyon.

'Is it possible,' exclaimed this venerated individual—for in the last few hours I had learned to regard him in that light—'that you are really Charles Rolfe, of Donnerdale Place?'

'Yes,' I said, grasping his hands with much fervour; 'and you—'

'I am your cousin; your second cousin, Major-General Benyon, just come from India. Have you never heard about me?'

'Why, yes,' I said, as a sudden gleam of recollection came across my mind of things long since forgotten. 'Why, you are my father's first cousin. You will excuse my not remembering you, as you have been in India the whole of my lifetime.'

'Why I am almost the only relation you have got in the world,' said the General, shaking me warmly by the hand. 'Here, mamma, Miss Clara, here's your cousin Charles Rolfe, whom we have been so anxious to see.'

Mrs. Benyon, with her benignant motherly way, shook my hand and kissed my forehead. Clara looked up timorously, not knowing in what way she should recognize and welcome her new-found kinsman. With a happy audacity I availed myself of the advantages afforded by the situation. I flung my arms around her and kissed her cheek. I trembled with joy as I received her pure embrace in return.

The Major-General looked very much astonished. 'By Jove—hum—ah yes—cousins will be affectionate, I suppose,' he muttered, as he divested himself of his spencer in the hall.

It will be remembered that Loch Katrine formed a part of our original programme. Here I found a letter waiting me from my father, the principal part of which ran as follows—

'I find that my cousin, Major-General Benyon, who came back

from India a few months ago, has gone into Scotland. If you can find out where he is, you had better try and meet him. From all I have heard I have a great respect for him. You know, perhaps, that he stands next in the entail for this property after yourself. And this reminds me, my dear boy, how very much I should desire to see you married. I should not like this property to pass away into the hands of strangers, although they are blood-relations. General Benyon has a daughter; if you and she were to hit it, that would be the very thing, but it is hardly probable. Marry whom you will, my son, for I can trust you, but marry soon.'

I now lived *en famille* with the Benyons. That wretched Lawford might undisturbedly continue his work, to have far greater trials. I walked and chatted in unrestrained intercourse with Clara and her parents. The gallant general was a fine fellow, but something of a martinet. He insisted that we should get up, walk, ride, dress, eat with military punctuality. After dinner one day, he told me how six or seven men left the regiment to get married, and stayed two days beyond their leave; whereupon he tried them all and gave them three dozen a-piece. Ugh! the wretch!

But when I came to him a week after, and told him about my love for Clara, and showed him my father's letter, he was deeply, most humanly moved. 'Certainly, my

dear boy, it would be a most excellent family arrangement. I am your heir-at-law, which is of course an absurd thing to say, but it would be a most happy thing for the two branches of the family to be united. I will tell 'her mamma to talk to Clara on the subject, and I have no doubt but she will see the propriety of obeying my wishes.' The dear old martinet evidently conceived that his daughter was ready to fall in love whenever she should receive specific directions on the subject.

With some difficulty I obtained permission to plead my own cause. I found Clara that afternoon in the lovely walk opposite Ellen's Isle, by Loch Katrine. I took her unresisting hand, and 'told her what the elders had determined in our case. There was a touching war of the red and white roses on her cheek, but I now knew her heart was mine.

There never was a courting more smooth and easy, a marriage more tranquil and blessed. It is said that the course of true love never did run smooth; but if this is the rule, there must be sometimes an exception. Perhaps if the love were more equal, free, spontaneous; if the lover rose to the full height of the occasion—though I am far from arrogating anything to myself—love might be more of that paradisaical state which it was intended to be, and so might run smooth. Sometimes marriages are made in heaven; I trust mine may have been, for in my case the course of true love really did run smooth.



VISITS AND REVISITS.

THE subject of visits perhaps deserves a more careful and deliberate examination than has as yet been attempted. Even the call, prologue and epilogue to the visit, comprises, as Count Smorltork said, a subject of no inconsiderable magnitude. When a lady's visiting-list reaches to some five hundred names it becomes evident that a considerable amount of business energy, not to mention strategy and statesmanship, is called into requisition. At the present time visiting has become a thoroughly organized social system throughout the country, the visiting of the recess being, perhaps, subordinate in importance to the parliamentary session, but obviously to that alone. There are now a certain set of great houses which have carried the art of hospitality to the highest point of perfection, and which are simply huge hotels with no bills, barring the customary fees. The 'locations' are first-rate, and the 'commons' also, and altogether it is not a bad thing to be driving or shooting all the afternoon, and then sit down to a glorious dinner with some of the most splendid wits and women in the world. It is a happy circumstance, also, that there are so many people who prefer receiving visitors even *en masse* to making a tour among their own friends. This is necessary to restore the balance in the case of those people who are the recipients, without being the bestowers of hospitality. Philosophers tell us that matter is imperishable, and the earth never loses in weight; and that if matter sometimes passes off in imponderable vapour, the balance is restored by the aërolites that occasionally descend upon the earth's surface. Thus there are good souls who keep the moral atmosphere sweet by atoning by extra goodness for the deficiencies of others. In the social world bounteous hosts make up for the impecunious detriments.

But we are now, in the first instance, discussing, not the donors but the recipients of hospitality.

And herein great is the difference between the visit and the revisit. A great deal depends on who you are, and on the place whither you are going. You may be a man of the world, on whom invitations are showered in the prettiest notes; or it may even be that so commonplace a matter as a visit may, in the stress of business, be a somewhat rare event. De Boots tells me that his invitations into the country would take him three years to clear off. Other men of the De Boots stamp have made to me the same remark. But the remark, though true, involves a fallacy. I grant that if they went from one place to another, in chronological order, it would take them three years to get through the lot. But the invitation that holds good for this season by no means holds good for next; and let De Boots get engaged to some girl, especially in a wrong set, or be cut off by a cantankerous uncle—not to mention heavier possible misfortunes—and he will be altogether excused for putting in an appearance. For myself, I approve intensely of the theory and practice of visits. Some people indeed carry the taste to a rabid extent, and look to them for the cheerfulness that they can only find in the balance and adjustment of their own minds. Again, it is carried to such an extent that London is almost periodically emptied from Saturday to Monday; and the brief migration of Easter and Whitsuntide is continually increasing in magnitude. It is a good thing for the heavy-weighted man of business that he should be able to get away into the pure air and pure thoughts of the country for a day or two, and a good thing for the budding maiden that she should come out into the world and see her friends for a month or two. But, as I said, great is the difference between the visit and the revisit. Much depends on the house you are visiting. If you are to be a guest at Windsor Castle or at Compiègne, you have rooms, carriage, and servants placed at your special disposal. Next to that

unlikely circumstance, you may be going to some great house, so great that even the difference from Windsor or Compiègne may not be very perceptible. Not so grandly, but quite as comfortably, you may be welcomed to the modest guest-chamber or 'spare room' of your hospitable friend in the temperate zone of the middle classes. How often is that guest-chamber adorned with all the adornments of a polished English home! the bookshelves well lined; the writing-table well furnished; the arm-chairs ample; the couch soft and yielding; the flowers, pictures, and the all-necessary tub carefully bestowed. You make your first visit with a curious mixed feeling. That is all anticipation which by-and-by will be reality. How unfamiliar seem those grounds on which hereafter you will dwell with fond recollection! And that cottage with the clambering roses, and the low verandah, and the croquetted lawn, is a momentary picture now, but presently it will be a reality and ever after a reality that abides. Sometimes in my wanderings I have passed such a dwelling, and I have amused myself by picturing to my mind what kind of beings the inmates might be; and time, in its whirligig of changes, has made me know the dwelling well of which I had once caught a pleasing transitory glimpse. I confess I have been disappointed at times. That Arcadian bower, with its imagined sylph-like fairy for its haunting 'minister,' turned out to be the abode of a dogmatical old gentleman with a Dutch love for tulips, and who prided himself on his early cabbages. At other times one's best anticipations have been realized, if not in beauty, at least in goodness, which, after all, is best. Yet it is odd for the first time to pass within the shadow of hospitable doors, perhaps having never seen your host, and with only his kind letter of invitation as your voucher. With a little practice you become utterly callous, and your mental attitude is that of amused attention to see what is going on. There are nervous people, I believe, ladies especially, who always feel uncomfortable till the strangeness wears away, and are

troubled with a headache while the strangeness lasts. But you, my well-seasoned friend—like the imperturbable gentleman, who, hearing that his hotel was on fire, directed the waiter, when the smoke should reach number twenty, to bring him his shaving-water—are the passive recipient of impressions. You wonder whether the womenkind are pleasant; if the wines be old or cheap; whether there will be much visiting; if there is shooting or fishing to be had, and so on. Yet there is always a notion of strangeness, a spice of adventure, in the first visit, even to the most hardened worldling, so different to the feeling of *au revoir*.

But how different is the revisit when the *au revoir* is fulfilled, when you come back once more, pleased, to those well pleased to see you. John touches his hat, with that gratitude which is a lively anticipation of future favours; and the pretty Abigail drops you a smile and a curtesy. You are shown into the room which is called your room. You perceive at once, with grateful feelings, that your old tastes have been recollected and attended to. You fling yourself down on your sofa with a sense of rest and ownership. In the same feeling you possess yourself of the lawn and drawing-room, the outside and inside of the dwelling where you can really feel at home. Your host will bring you up a bottle from that particular bin which, on the first occasion, you learned to know and value. In the evening you talk about the eldest son, George, who is at Oxford, and discuss his chances in the schools or on the river; or inquire after the young bride of the family, how she likes the neighbourhood where she has settled down. And in the morning, forgetful of your many letters, and that pressing business, you saunter away hour after hour, listening to their music or receiving their gentle confidences. Lord Rochester said that after all Sauntering was Charles the Second's true mistress; and she is indeed a Dulcinea of whose sweet beguileful ways much enamoured talk might be made. I know some of the cleverest people

in the world who are smitten even to madness with the passion of sauntering. I always taste of its dangerous delights on the occasion of the revisit. But presently one has to brace up the moral energies, if only to take a farewell of those with whom you have enjoyed that sweetest of all pleasures, that of exquisite companionship, with feelings like those with which Dante and Byron watched the first sunset at sea.

Then look again at first visits to places destined to fill a considerable section of one's life, to London, or Oxford, or Paris. Tennyson has given us a picture of an eager-hearted boy when he first draws near London and sees its lights overhead, and his spirit is longing to be up and doing among men. Supposing our country youth attain a very fair degree of professional success, that he comes to jog about all day in his carriage after his patients, or walks from his chambers to Westminster Hall, with the comfortable assurance that he is winning his way there, I wonder if he will consider that these glorious anticipations have received an adequate realization. I have repeatedly been greatly interested in the case of middle-aged persons from the colonies or from America coming to London for the first time. They seem to take it in a dazed sort of way, certainly, but on the whole in a more phlegmatic manner than I should have anticipated. The reason is that their minds are fully strung for the occasion, and they were prepared for all that they could see or even more. They repeat the line of Gebir—

‘Is this the mighty ocean—is this all?’

It would be highly curious to find an instance of a person suddenly introduced into London, and to see what would be the effect on a mind altogether unprepared. It is wonderful how soon the mind assimilates itself to London. I saw it first in opening youth, and it seemed to me a recovered city of my dreams, and soon it seemed to be part even of my past existence, and the tragedy and glory of ‘Oxford Street

and its stony-hearted terraces,’ as De Quincey says, were soon incorporated into my life. Since then life is almost an incessant series of coming up to town and going out of it; and I never turn towards it but with a boyish, exultant feeling of brilliant possibilities in store; and, singularly enough, I never leave it but with a feeling of infinite relief, with soft images of woods and waters before my mental eye. But while London changes little, and so gradually that any surprise is a rare sensation, it always seems, after going back to Paris for any time, that Baron Haussman has been contriving a series of scenic surprises for us. Some new garden has been thrown out or some old one has been beautified, and simultaneously great demolitions and great constructions have been made. Occasionally one meets with people who, ages ago, rushed to Paris at the conclusion of the great war, and then rested from their travelling for many years, and going back at last to the Paris of the advanced Second Empire, have found all the ancient landmarks confused, and have groped sadly among ancient untouched monuments, and all the new region beyond the Place de la Concorde is to them an astonishment. It may be said generally that the first visit to Paris is a veritable enchantment, and each revisit is a gradual disillusioning. Or take such a city as Oxford and compare your first and your second thoughts about it. I suppose no one ever went for the first time to Oxford without some measure of excitement. Perhaps at first you were somewhat disappointed, for the imagination demanded some brilliant colouring rather than the sobered and toned-down appearance that met the view. But did you ever know such a city that at each revisiting so gradually and completely grew upon your mind? And if you have spent some of the most impressionable years of your life there, that beautiful city which perchance at your first view in its cold, severe perfection seemed the negation of human sympathy, gradually entwines itself with every chord of your being.

And what a revisit is that when, some years afterwards, a sobered, married man, you bring up your wife to see you take your M.A., and act as her cicerone through chapels and libraries, galleries and halls.

Perhaps you know those charming poems of Wordsworth's on Yarrow Unvisited, Yarrow Visited, and Yarrow Revisited. They bring out very clearly and beautifully some mental moods such as those we have been discussing. There is a whole wealth of poetical illustration belonging to Yarrow stream as to the twin Ettrick stream of the valley. The Ballad of Hamilton that calls the bonnie bride 'my winsome Yarrow' made especially a deep impression on Wordsworth's mind. But yet he will not visit Yarrow. He will keep his treasured dreams of long-past days, and if ever his heart should be dull under care or age there is the thought that Yarrow is yet to be seen.

'Let bees and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burnmill meadow;
The swan on still Saint Mary's Lake,
Floats double, swan and shadow!
We will not see them, will not go
To-day nor yet to-morrow;
Enough if in our hearts we know
There's such a place as Yarrow.'

But years afterwards, one September day, he visits Yarrow, and finds that the reality was not less lovely than the vision. Never in all his wanderings had he seen greener hills.

'And through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
Is visibly delighted;
For not a feature of those hills
Is in the mirror slighted.'

The account of the visit is, as the account of a visit should be, mainly descriptive; and it is not too much to say that the English poet, beyond any Scottish bard, has appropriated Yarrow and made it his own. And now let us turn to that exquisite poem written just twenty years later, entitled 'Yarrow Revisited.' He had gone there from Abbotsford with Sir Walter Scott and other friends just before Sir Walter left on that last sad journey to Naples.

'Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day,
Their dignity installing
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves,
Were on the bough, or falling;
But breezes played and sunshine gleamed,
The forest to embolden;
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot
Transparence through the golden.'

He had a fresh association now for the gliding stream and the keep of old Newark tower. He found that 'memory's shadowy moonshine' had a charm no less potent than anticipation, though at first he had been unwilling to see Yarrow, and in that way to part with any of his holy and tender dreams. The natural feeling is very tender and sweet; the fear of the visit lest an imaginative illusion should in any way be sacrificed; the satisfying happiness of the visit itself, and the tender mixed feeling with which he made the revisit so many years later with the great minstrel of the border, might go far to win back the passion-inflamed readers of romance to the pure, simple muse of Wordsworth.

The other day I climbed a lofty steep, the summit forming a landmark for half the county and for sailors out at sea, of a long range of downs. It was surmounted by a dark grove, sombre and Druidical. It was eleven years ago since I stood there last—eleven years changeful, active, momentous. The external panoramic landscape was all the same. Perhaps a warmer colour was given to the nearer fields by the Italian clover, and here the axe had been busy and the woodland thinned. Otherwise all the landscape, until it became indistinguishable as the plain melted into the horizon, or was closed by the blue marginal line of sea, or was shut in by the Surrey hills, showed unchanged but so changed! The farms and homesteads, the green, narrow bridle-path, the white highways, the halls embowered in foliage, the curling smoke from slender hamlet, and the canopy of cloud overhanging city and large town, showed the immutability of outward things contrasted with man's Protean nature and his unmade and remade form and nature. There came two maidens

past, city girls, unless my eyes deceived me, with their sweethearts. That ancient form of amusement is always as fresh as it is old. I like those girls, because I think that it argues good taste that they should come away to this lovely romantic spot, perhaps for the rare holiday, given by some shop, instead of going to some place of city or suburban amusement. Presently there rides by a farmer, heavy and hearty, with snowy hair. He draws up and slackens rein, well pleased to be garrulous. 'The harriers, bless your soul, they have not hunted this part of the country for years and years. They do say, however, that the young lord intends to hunt with foxhounds next season. Things were not the same as when Sir Harry was their member—member for their part of the county for forty years at a stretch. Yes, it was a pretty little church down below, it was so at least before they spoiled it. They had pulled down the good old social pews and made them all just the same like, and nearly darkened the church. Parson had got some new-fangled way of not leaving off the service at the end of the sermon, but he took up his hat and walked away.' Thus the farmer, according to his ecclesiastical lights. And what about that madcap the Honourable George? 'Oh! he was very quiet now. He had broken an arm, a leg, and a collar-bone, and could only come to the meet in a dog-cart, but he could swear and take ale with the best of them even yet. It was said that he generally went about attended by a sheriff's officer. They said that Mrs. Brackenbury, of the Hall, allowed him a hundred a year for the game that he should send in, and upon this hundred a year did the Honourable George subsist.' So far did the garrulous old man converse, and, barring that he administered some slight shocks by the changes of which he spoke, his discourse was full of interest. I thought of the changes that had passed since I last climbed these breezy slopes. There was the splendid belle of our party, tall and bounding as a roe, full of gaiety and fun, and she has lately taken

the veil in a convent. Ah, my Amanda! through what vicissitudes and sorrows must you have passed to have attuned your mind to a final change like that! That opulent banker, who seemed a very Croesus, has failed and, financially speaking, has gone to the dogs. The boy of our party has married and the children are coming on. It was quite a relief when I descended the hill and sought an ancient hall through the well-remembered park. In their freshness and verdure the woods wore their sempiternal beauty, and on the walls the divine sunset of Claude had not turned a colour paler, nor had that youthful warrior of Vandyke changed a hair. And when the old countess came, as in the years of old, to be wheeled up and down the terrace, it indeed seemed to me that the river of time had flowed backwards and stood still.

I so well remember going back to an old cathedral city, which I had not seen for many years since I lived there as a boy. I confess that it was with a deep emotion that I came back after the absence of many years. During those years I had been residing in a sequestered country district, and my memory, aided by my imagination, had adorned the old city with every degree of architectural magnificence. That had been a pitiful Hegira when I had been compelled to leave it; and no pilgrim ever resorted to the Holy Places under more intense feeling than when I returned to the Zion of my youth. I remember so well that it was a moonlight night when I reached the station. In my childhood the railway had been a new invention here, and the railway system had terminated at this point. I remembered how, as a child, it had been my delight to come down to the station on half-holidays to watch the arriving and departing trains. The travellers seemed so business-like and independent who came and went; and I used to wonder if the time would ever come when I, too, should go forth behind the iron horse to penetrate into the dim unknown. At the present time this station, or

congeries of stations, is a terminus for several lines of railway; but I still traced that primordial station amid the accretion thereto of several other large buildings. I wandered for hours and hours in that moonlight night through the silent and deserted city. Somehow or other, the streets, which to my imagination had seemed interminable and grand, were very rapidly traversed and had shrunk into modified dimensions. The cathedral that suddenly burst upon me, bathed in its moonlit beauty, was at least no disappointment. It would have been impossible, even in imagination, to have exaggerated the perfection of that most perfect structure. Yet somehow the place seemed strangely altered. I sought out, the next morning, my former home. For years past it had appeared to my imagination as a kind of feudal castle, and I am afraid I had so described it to my youthful companions. It was a very good house, old and solid; and I maintain that an ancient arch with a low massive oak door really furnished a solid substitution for my airy fiction; but, on the whole, I pronounced that the house, especially since it had been allowed to fall very considerably into dilapidation, was decidedly inferior to Arundel Castle. Close by was a place called 'The Alley,' a private yard with a right of way, where, as schoolchildren, we had been allowed to amuse ourselves. Formerly it had seemed to me an airy and most spacious domain, but I now saw, with disgust, that three strides and a jump would clear it. The violence of the reaction from exaggerated recollections was very great. If hitherto I had been looking at objects through a magnifying-lens, I was now looking at them through a diminishing lens. It took me several 'revisits' before I could accurately adjust my mental visions, and, allowing both for exaggeration and depreciation, could do the Fair City justice.

I remember that as a child our walks in the town and neighbourhood had been strictly limited. There were certain boundaries beyond which we might not trans-

gress. There was a great river beyond whose margin we might wander, but only to a certain point, which was the more disappointing, as past the city the river flowed between contracted banks, which finely expanded some half-dozen miles below. It was with us just as it used to be with poor Elaine—

'And when you used to take me with the flood
Up the great river in the boatman's boat,
Only you would not pass beyond the cape,
'That has the poplar on it; there you sit
Your limit, oft returning with the tide;
And yet I cried because you would not pass
Beyond it, and far up the shining flood.'

This river, too, was a tidal one, and it expanded until it became 'a great water.' Gradually the stream became an arm of the sea; the water that had been quite fresh was quite salt; the breezes freshened westward, the winds grew hoarse, the seabirds gathered, waves, tiny and then larger, lapped the shore that from greensward had changed to sandy or pebbly beach. This river is celebrated for that tidal phenomenon called 'the Bore.' On the broad water this phenomenon is not so conspicuously seen, although it is dangerous enough to the unwary boatman. The effect was very striking in the river bed. Suddenly you heard a rapid, rushing sound of an indescribable character. Then, looking down stream, you saw a wall of water several feet high rapidly nearing you. It swept by you in a whirr, and in a second the fields are flooded. You must be very agile, or presently you are ankle or knee-deep in the overflowing waters. The recollection of this phenomenon had grown exceedingly dim till the time of this revisit, and I was now anxious to observe and note accurately the nature of the phenomenon. To talk philosophically, this is the great use of our 'revisits': that they enable us to test the inaccurate reasoning and observation, and hasty generalizations of youth. On going back to this place I put in execution a design I had long calculated on effecting. This was to pay a visit to a famous castle some sixteen miles off: a castle known in English history for the perpetration of the foulest crime, and—if rumour

had not belied it—the home of a high-handed race, that had never shrunk from blood or denied itself pleasure. I went over and saw the old tower of which such barbaric cruelties were related; but as it lay, grim yet peaceful in the broad sunshine, with the pleasure crowded with flower-beds and fruit-trees, the vines and peaches trailed against the walls, that long-cherished vision of the keep of brute material force faded away, and another governing hallucination of the mind disappeared.

But most curious of all in the revisit is the renewed knowledge of persons. In the particular case I am mentioning, after the absence of many years, I came back still quite a young man. And I was able to tell a very fine young woman that, as a matter of fact, she had been my earliest love. These favourable conditions have, of course, ceased to exist. I think of Byron's lines—

'If I should meet thee'
After long years,
How should I greet thee—
With silence and tears.'

But if when a Byronic hero meets Her, to find her thin and fallow, with an affected intonation of voice, and a general rigour and precision in personal appearance, then the Byronic hero instinctively discards the silence and tears, and falls back on the ordinary greetings of society. After a certain time a period often comes in which no amount of time makes an appreciable change. I can conscientiously say that I have known persons in whom the lapse of three-and-thirty years, the lapse of a generation, had made no appreciable change. They are brought to a state of solidarity and the fluent lines have been hardened into a rigid immobility. In this case I had been living in close contact and had not been able to see with eyes sharpened by a long separation. But it is altogether different in those years when the changes are most rapid. I remember well a most hospitable house in which there was a bevy of

fair children. The little loves; the laughing, smiling, curly, graceful, happy children! The musical ripple of laughter, the frank confidences, the unchecked glee, the wrapt, eager attention to fairy tale or story; such a glorious cluster of child-lives was there in the old days! But eight years passed away, and mighty changes happened. The rank was thinned—both eldest and youngest had passed away. But as I entered that familiar drawing-room and saw father and mother as in the days of yore, hardly a line furrowed or a hair silvered, a bevy of tall, stately damsels sailed in, imperial and august. With much graciousness they remembered me in the days of old, and they treated me as if the old chain of association were unbroken; but for all that I knew that it was broken and the charm of the old lunes gone. I could no longer dance the grapes before the rosebud lips, or fold them to my embrace to listen to my stories.

Me then, much musing, do those revisits sadly please. There is something sad about them when the children have grown into stately maidens, or the stately maidens have become careworn matrons; when neighbourhoods that used to be lonely and solitary are bought up by speculators and are overrun by brick villas; but still, if you are adhesive in your attachments, you cannot help haunting them again and again. 'To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new' is a very good motto as representing the adventurous and energetic side of life. Yet there is a deep feeling in the familiar *au revoir*, and even when the revisit has a dash of melancholy about it, yet it unlocks the keys of all the associations; and to quote Wordsworth once more—

'Nor deem that localized Romance
Plays false with our affections;
Unsantifies our tears—made sport
For fanciful defections.
Ah, no! the visions of the past
Sustain the heart in feelings,
Life as she is—our changeful life,
With friends and kindred dealings.'

F. A.

WAITING FOR A VALENTINE.

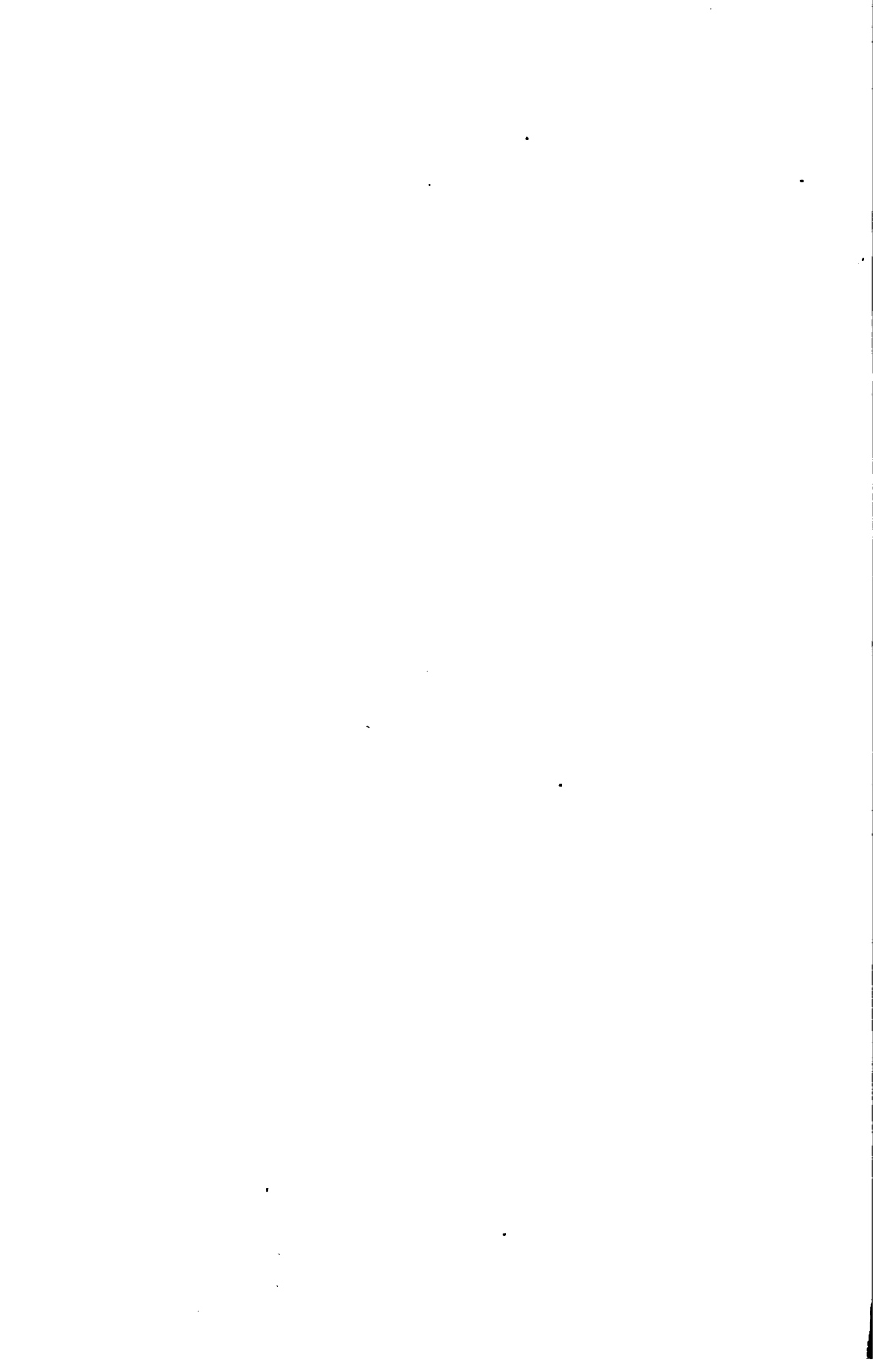
GAY feast of sainted Valentine!
 How may I best thy presence greet?
 Expectant, eager heads popped out
 From every window down the street,
 The postman's oft-repeated knocks,
 Miss Smith's young ladies o'er the way,
 With fluttering hearts at every sound,—
 These mark thy coming, sacred day!

Says Phyllis, 'Breakfast, sir, is served.'
 Stay, where's my toast, and where's my tea?
 Ah! well I know thou'st lured her thoughts,
 Saint Valentine, far, far from me.
 With trembling hands she tends my wants,
 As nearer sounds each sharp rat-tat:
 Alas! I am not calm myself!
 I start,—ah me! what noise is that?

'The post is close: Your letters, sir,'
 My Phyllis says, 'I now will get.'
 My letters! Valentine, to me
 What canst thou bring, great Saint?—and yet
 A strange emotion thrills me through:
 What's this? I tremble in my chair,
 My face grows pale, as now I hear
 Her steps returning up the stair.

It is not that the *prisca Venus*—
 By which I mean some ancient flame—
 My bosom burns; no gushing maiden
 Can move me now; no queenly dame;
 My heart is stern as steel or flint,
 Or as the nether millstone, hard;
 I wait no stanza from my fair,
 I've long since ceased to play the bard!

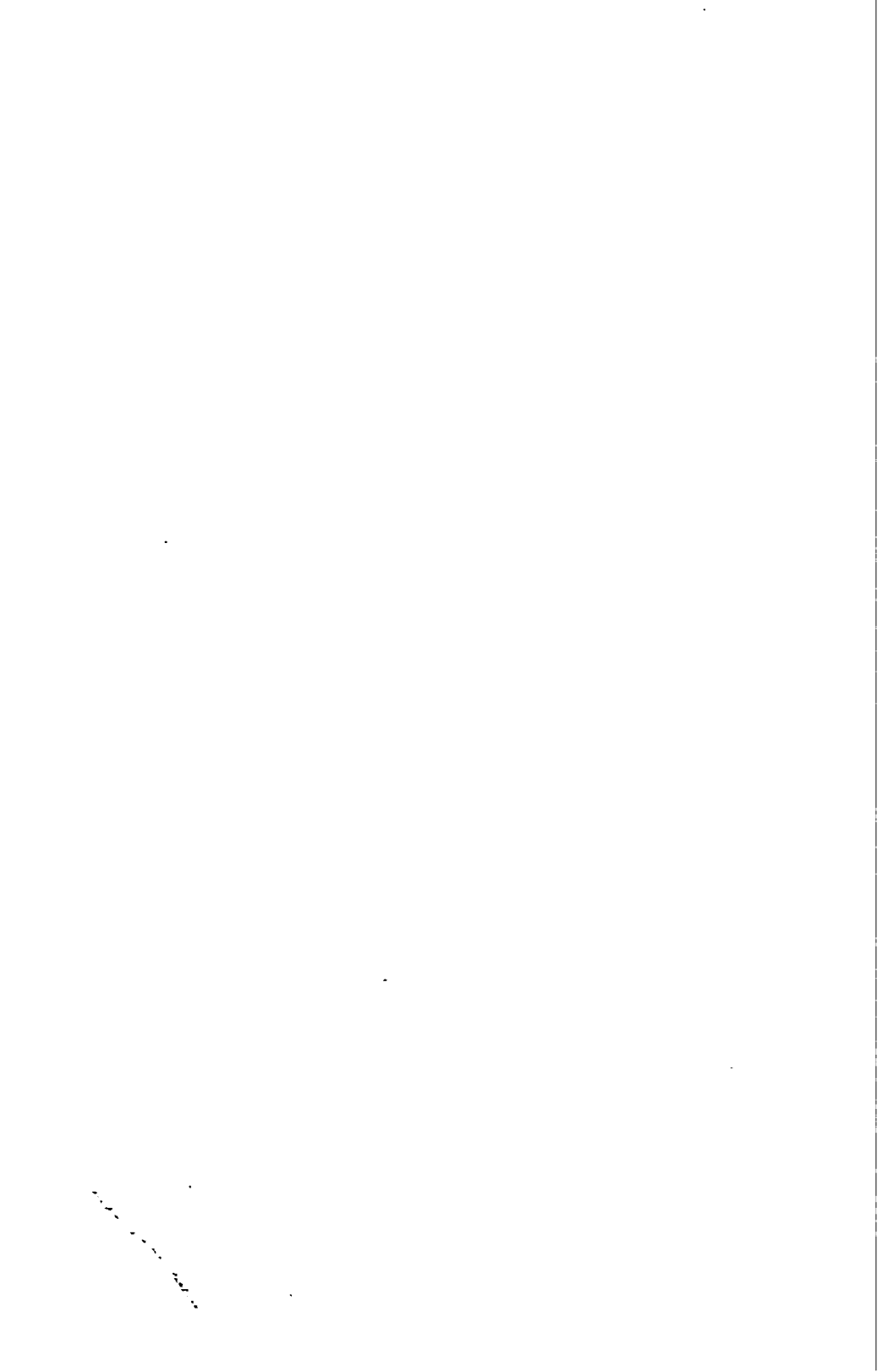
It is not that my memory stirs
 With visions lost, of long ago;
 I mourn not now o'er shipwrecked hopes
 'Tis simply this that moves me so,—
 Just three days since a bill of mine—
 The sum precise don't ask—fell due;
 And now I wait a valentine
 From friend Abednego the Jew!





Drawn by H. Paterson.]

WHO SENT IT?—A SKETCH ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.



THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

A Sketch.

(Concluded.)

THE Earl of Clarendon, almost by inherent right, holds the portfolio of the Foreign Office, and most naturally so, in the eternal fitness of things. He commenced his diplomatic career half a century ago, and still his eye is not dim nor his natural force abated. He was only twenty when he went out as attaché to St. Petersburg, and he is now, for the fourth time, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The singularity is that it is not for the fifth time; but Lord Palmerston passed him over in his last ministry, and he had an interregnum of four years before he reposed on the soft inglorious cushion of the Duchy of Lancaster. Lord Granville, indeed, made an admirable Foreign Secretary. Save for one recalcitrant peer, he might, in 1859, have been Premier and formed a ministry. It is well understood that there is considerably less competition for the seals of the Foreign Office than for any other great office; but in their party Lords Clarendon and Granville would be far away the best men, Earl Russell making a bad third, or, rather, being incompetent. Lord Granville had an advantage which Lord Russell certainly never possessed, of being able to speak French with a perfection which has visibly astonished and delighted Frenchmen. Never was foreign statesmanship turned to a better account than when Lord Granville gave such vigorous and important aid to the first Great Exhibition of 1851. But in the accumulated experience of the Foreign Office, at least since Palmerston has left us, Lord Clarendon is hardly rivalled. And yet he had to stand the fearful ordeal of the Crimean war. It was under his guidance that we 'drifted' into war, and it was Lord Clarendon himself who employed and gave currency to the phrase. But it was well understood that he had wisely, manfully, and patriotically done his duty; and the late Lord

Derby, in endeavouring to form a ministry, desired nothing better than that he should be able to retain the services of Lord Clarendon as Foreign Secretary. Lord Clarendon had the happiness of concluding the Crimean war in 1856, although in the following Conference at Paris he showed almost to as much disadvantage as Lord Russell at the Conference of Vienna. Among the great services which Lord Clarendon has done for the country, it will be remembered that he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in those doleful years, after the failure of the potato crop had forced Free Trade on Sir Robert, and the gaunt shapes of famine and fever forced emigration on the Irish Celts. It was an ungracious, anxious, bitter time; and after he had done the work, the reputation of it was eclipsed by the brilliant reign of the chivalrous, magnificent, and gay-hearted Eglington, who won Irish hearts as they were never won again, except, perhaps, by the Duke of Abercorn.

As we look on the veteran politician who has done so much towards making up the history of our century, we cannot help thinking how many historical associations gather round him. On the mother's side he comes down from that great Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon, not only Lord Chancellor, but from his Dantesque sketches of character, truly called 'the Chancellor of Human Nature,' and who, through his daughter Ann gave two Queens Regnant to the country. On the father's side he is descended from the famous Bedfordshire house of the Villiers, which gave to the first and second Charles the glories and infamies of the first and second Dukes of Buckingham, of the new creation. We do not know that, historically, there is very much evidence to carry out the character which the novelists, especially Sir Walter Scott and Dumas, have given them, but there seems to be a large body of unfavourable tradition. It

adds to the historical halo about Lord Clarendon, that he is the possessor of Kenilworth Castle, whose decaying towers and walls are for ever gilded with the richest colours of romance. Nor are the family of the Clarendons, besides the Earl, unworthy of their lineage. Lady Theresa Lewis rendered substantial services to letters, which relieved and adorned the heavier works of her husband, so thoughtful but so rabid in his literary scepticism. One brother manfully fought the battle of Free Trade in days when the battle seemed well-nigh hopeless. Another brother was an earnest and hard-working clergyman who successively became Bishop of Carlisle and of Durham. He is supposed to have been worried to death by attacks made on him for giving a young son-in-law a very valuable living. If he had simply said that it was his duty to provide for his own, and if he didn't he would be worse than an infidel, this would have been intelligible; but his unctuous way of defending the appointment threw the newspapers into paroxysms. But we all see now that he was a very good man, whose lawn adorned both the House of Lords and the house of Villiers.

There is one great peer who stands prominently forward in the House, who has twice been a Whig Cabinet Minister, but, as Edgar Allan Poe's raven remarked, 'Nevermore—oh nevermore.' This is the great Earl Grey, who, with all his waywardness, imperiousness, impracticableness, deserves no less an epithet than great. There are people indeed who believe—and they say that Earl Grey fully endorses the opinion—that the greatest man in the house is Earl Grey. But then people also say, 'What has he done?' He has had his life, and what has he done with it? The great Northumberland Earl is essentially an ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν. Not only was he born to high rank and high estate, but he succeeded a father who revolutionized us by the Reform Act, and was yet a most patrician Premier, who scorned to look at the newspapers. There is no reason to suppose that the present earl should

not have been Premier also. If so, we should have expected great things from him, only he did nothing at the War Office and the Colonial Office; *capax imperii nisi imperasset*. But no one can work with him, and he cannot work with any one. He upset a government once by refusing to act with Lord Palmerston; and it has not been in his power to do so a second time. He is a remarkable example that shows how great intellectual qualities are marred, to use a mild expression, by ill-assorted moral qualities. He is not now what he was in the days of Plancus the Consul. His tall form is bent with age and infirmity, and he grasps an oaken staff. His face is worn and marred. His voice is thin and shrill. After a time he becomes so exhausted that his voice is hardly audible, but he is always determined to say his say, and that invincible determination conquers. From the cross-benches he assails with an almost savage ferocity all parties, all opinions, all politicians. He gives no quarter, and would desire to take none. He is, as the Duke of Argyll called him, 'the chartered libertine of debate.' We should say that the lines would suit him—

'the unconquerable will
And study of revenge—immortal hate'

—only the revenge and hate are, we trust, only Pickwickian and parliamentary. But still it is impossible to speak of Lord Grey without respect and gratitude, for he is one of the most thoughtful, far-sighted, and philosophical of statesmen. He is a born statesman. State-craft lurks on his face, as on Burleigh's of yore; the eye and brow bespeak intellect and command, but perchance they speak pride and passion too. The man who is confronted with Earl Grey has not a happy time of it. The earl has the knack of fixing an opponent with his eye, after the manner of great orators and actors. Not content with fixing him with his eye, the earl will point at him with his finger, hobbling to the table and flinging all his imperiousness and impulsiveness into that favourite gesture. We remember,

during our constant attendance at the great debate last session, how, on the first night, the whisper that ran through house and gallery of 'Lytton,' 'Lytton,' 'Lytton.' The debate had languished since the dinner hour. The Duke of Rutland is a mighty magnate, but not a great orator; Lord Stratford de Redcliffe a mighty statesman and diplomatist, but not a great orator; Lord Romilly possibly a mighty lawyer, though they say not, and certainly not a great orator: they had all spoken, but not eloquently, when a somewhat round-faced, happy-looking Irish bishop, Dr. Alexander, of Derry—who, by-the-way, has written some very good poetry—with Irish dash and spirit threw an immense amount of vitality into the discussion. When the cry of 'Lytton' was heard, we thought that 'the savage soul of fight was up'—that the debate was beginning to assume the grand historical character which would surely attach to it. But when Lord Lytton rose Earl Grey arose at the same time. Every one wanted to hear Lord Lytton. They knew that though rare and somewhat ineffectual as a debater, the grand oration, elaborate and polished, was peculiarly his forte, and there was every prospect of a rich, intellectual treat. But then Earl Grey rose. At that moment he was perhaps the most unpopular man in England. But Earl Grey stood like a rock. Nothing but a surgical operation could ever, at any time, get into his head the notion that, under any circumstances, he ought to give way. For the moment the two great men were antagonistically confronted. Suddenly he gave way, with the astonishment of men who hear thunder out of a clear sky, or, rather, who see a clear sky in spite of thunder. Most probably a hurried intimation was given to him that all Lord Lytton meant to do was to make a motion of adjournment. Oh, why did not Lord Lytton speak that time?—the minds of the audience were wound up to that point of heat when winged words are met with swift emotions. The adjournment was made, and long before five next day we

were in the crowded lobby—crowded with men on the *qui vive* to hear Lord Lytton, while richly-apparelled ladies, with proud and delicate gait, were being escorted to the galleries to hear their favourite novelist. But that ruthless Lord Grey resumed the debate. Probably not a being in that crowded chamber wished to hear him speak; but he spoke in spite of them all; and for a time, at least, secured the attention of the finest auditory in the world. After a time he flagged; after a little longer time he became hardly audible. For a man of his mark he makes an extraordinarily poor impression on his peers. Like Cassandra, he is disbelieved; like Athiophel, he is disregarded. The old rule, that the mover of the adjournment resumes the debate, was set aside. Perhaps Lord Lytton gave way to Lord Grey's older standing as a statesman. There had been a whisper that he had been intending to speak against the Conservative side, and perhaps he had been persuaded to forego the intention.

At all events Lord Lytton has not yet spoken in the House of Lords. He translates Horace, and he writes his rhyming political comedy; but that great influence, in the front among those accumulated instances which of late years have added so greatly to the weight of the House of Lords, has not yet been felt there. We all admire Lord Lytton, but perhaps our appreciation of a nature as many-sided as Göthe's itself, is not yet what it should be or what it actually is on the Continent. In comparison, Lord Lytton is to most Englishmen what most Englishmen are to barbarians. In future times it will be remembered that he has also had a large share in practical legislation, and has inaugurated the national existence of British Columbia and Queensland. He is happy in a son who remarkably exemplifies Mr. Galton's theory of 'Hereditary Genius,' which may be applied with striking results to our hereditary chamber.

The office of the Lord President of the Council, according to statute, ranks next after that of the Lord High Chancellor. It brings before

us the idea of some venerable statesman calming, by his benignity, wisdom, and authority, the unruly elements of younger spirits. This is almost the constitutional theory of the office of Lord President. Such a theory was almost realized in the Tory president, the late Marquis of Salisbury, and the Whig president, the late Marquis of Lansdowne. Making a ministry reminds us of the children's game, where every one has to make a rush for a seat—the kind of seat does not signify, if only one is procured. In this way the round pegs often settle down into square holes, and the square pegs into round holes. Earl de Grey and Ripon, while a young man, according to party exigencies, presides over the august council of Queen Victoria. His father is known in history as 'Prosperity Robinson,' and 'Prosperity Robinson' is a term that might well suit the inheritor of his name and honours. For not only is he Lord President; but he came, within one twelvemonth, into two earldoms, his father's and his uncle's, with corresponding estates 'to carry out the idea.' His rise has been very remarkable: from Under Secretary for War he became Secretary of State for War in Lord Palmerston's ministry, exemplifying the words 'Unto him who hath unto him it shall be given,' and a precedent once being established, he is again Cabinet Minister, to the exclusion of such men as Mr. Layard and Mr. Stansfeld.

An office not so ornamental, but still 'purely decorative, is that of the Lord Privy Seal. We wonder why the right honourable triumvirate, while discharging dockyard labours and declining to fill up old appointments, do not abolish the large stipends paid for duties merely honorary, like those of the Privy Seal. Nevertheless my Lord Privy Seal is a very considerable man. He is one of the statesmen whom Christ Church has given to the country. He was Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Lord Aberdeen, and as Lord Wodehouse he was for two years our ambassador at St. Petersburg, when we once

more revived our friendly relations with the Czar of all the Russias. He was also our envoy—our most unsuccessful envoy—in endeavouring to arrange the Schleswig-Holstein difficulty. He made a highly creditable Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Lord Kimberley, a peerage of Earl Russell's creation, stands very high, and he will stand higher yet when he moves more to the front. A younger peer of whom this may be said, and who is already a great authority on Irish questions, is Lord Dufferin. He broke upon the House some years ago with great freshness and enthusiasm, making a rattling good speech, after his former fashion at the Oxford Union, and quoting a great lot of Tennyson, *con amore*. Tennyson is almost superseding Horace as a source of quotation in Parliament, and he is also regularly set for Greek and Latin verse in the Oxford and Cambridge examinations. Lord Dufferin produced a charming little book descriptive of a yacht voyage, 'High Latitudes,' which was an index to a nature of much ability and amiability, and he has since acted as sponsor to some inferior writing of the 'Hon. Impulsia Gushington.'

Looking down the list of governmental peers who are good enough to help to rule us, we hardly see that Lord Northbrook calls for any remark. The Marquis of Lansdowne has signalized himself by declining to accept his thousand a year as a junior Lord of the Treasury; but the public could hardly expect less liberality from the man who owns Bowood, and whose town house occupies an entire side of Berkeley Square. Lord Morley has an ability and culture that deserve a higher place than that of Lord in Waiting.

'Now, Muse, let's talk of'—dukes. All dukes ought to be Conservative. Conservatism is essentially intended for dukes, and all dukes are obviously meant to be Conservative. And this is well-nigh the case. That Whiggism, which is almost as extinct as Jacobinism, still lurks amid the strawberry leaves, and in these democratic days will soon hardly be discernible from Constitutionalism. The Duke of

Marlborough, the late President of the Council, did not do very much beyond exercising a pleasant and considerable patronage in appointing Inspectors of Schools; but he served an admirable novitiate in the House of Commons, and is the author of important ecclesiastical legislation. The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos is a nobleman who, from circumstances of his domestic history, has conciliated an extraordinary amount of sympathy and regard. He has also made himself a great authority upon railways. Mr. Bright has succeeded at the Board of Trade a nobleman who in business capacity is probably not one whit his inferior, the Duke of Richmond. The Duke does not shine as a debater. There is not a spark of effective oratory about him. He is useful for the dinner hour but not much beyond. And this helps to show us that a false and exaggerated importance is attached to parliamentary eloquence in this country. For the Duke is a man of sterling sense and worth. He brings to the national councils honesty, sagacity, and experience. Such a man as the Duke of Richmond illustrates very well what English dukes can be in their own neighbourhoods—excepting, of course, their Graces of Hamilton and Newcastle. He is a good neighbour, a wise landlord, a diligent and useful magistrate, and conciliates respect from all classes ‘in his own country,’ where it is always hard for a man to obtain his due share of honour. The Duke of Abercorn, again, is ‘a model duke,’ who has ruled Ireland both generously and justly, and is a great prop in the reconstruction of the Irish Reformed Church. The Duke of Somerset, in his earlier career as Lord Seymour, obtained a considerable share of public reputation; but for years past he appears to have steadily devoted himself to the demolition of his political character. He had some rough passages with the late Bishop Philpotts, when the victory was claimed by both sides. But the Duke delighted in rough passages, and sometimes got splashed by the troubled waters. There is probably no man in the House whose political

opinion is more highly valued than the Duke of Cleveland’s. He acquired his peculiar reputation in the Lower House, as Lord Harry Vane. He is said to have acquired great influence over the mind of Lord Palmerston because he reflected so exactly the average sentiment and sagacity of high-bred Englishmen.

Let us, in the mind’s eye, Horatio, take a glance over the reassembling peers. As we have said, the great change from last session will be the absence of Lord Derby. But other changes have been wrought by death. The landlord of the House of Lords has gone, the late Marquis of Westminster. We have heard much of Lord Westminster’s thriftiness and a little of his munificence. It ought rather to have been the other way. He was indeed eccentrically thrifty; would avoid passing through a turnpike gate and prefer a fourpenny omnibus to a sixpenny. But to men of vast property perhaps the only idea of money is in coins; large sums are to them merely bits of paper or arithmetical expressions. But Lord Westminster really did most munificent things; he was of the select company of large givers, only morbidly anxious that his givings should not be known. Lord Foley, the captain of the Hon. Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms, is gone; liked and respected, he will be much missed. The ‘Guardian’ told an anecdote of Lord Foley entertaining the Prince of Wales at dinner. When the Prince proposed a cigar afterwards, Lord Foley suggested that they should adjourn to the stables, a movement which was accordingly carried out.

Another great change will be the incursion of a mob of new prelates. The appointment of Dr. Temple has led to the extraordinary phenomenon of the ‘Times’ reprinting his sermons at full length. His sermons are short, and we hope the constituents of the ‘Times’ have been edified. We read them ourselves and also the volume of Rugby sermons; but they do not at all modify the impression left on the mind by the first essay in the

'Essays and Reviews.' Bishop Temple is a good scholar and an earnest politician; but he seems to us to be very vague and unscientific in the matters of his own profession. The death of Viscount Strangford, some time back, removed from the peerage its most remarkable linguist. The Duke of Devonshire is now its greatest mathematician. He was Second Wrangler, but proved that he was better than the Senior Wrangler by taking the First Smith's Prize. Lord Lyttelton is undoubtedly its greatest scholar. He was Senior Classic at Cambridge, and such a Senior Classic as Cambridge has seldom seen. He writes Greek and Latin poetry as if the dead tongues were living tongues to him. Not even bishops of the Head Master species can compete with him. Earl Stanhope is the great historian of the House. In days when Macaulay will be neglected on account of his partisan, unfair spirit and his rhetorical style—when Froude will be laid aside on account of his sophistries and his inhumanity,—Lord Stanhope will be studied as a plain, earnest, truth-loving, truth-telling chronicler. Here, alas! our eulogy must cease, for he is certainly by no means a good speaker. Lord Colchester should be mentioned, a good scholar and a great historian. He is officiating just now as one of the Public Examiners in the University of Oxford. The 'Guardian,' however, is incorrect in saying that he is the first nobleman who has held that office, for the same office has been held by Lord Stanhope. Lord Colchester speaks admirable sense, but his *physique*, his voice, and even his volubility are against him. The great monetary authority is Lord Overstone, than whom none knows better the nature, laws, and limits of British credit or who raises a statelier superstructure thereon.

There are two noble earls who have been Cabinet Ministers with considerable reputation, but in one case the reputation is falling, and in the other rising: we mean the Earls of Malmesbury and Carnarvon. Yet Lord Malmesbury is a man to whom the Liberal press has never

done justice. He was Foreign Minister at a time when our relations with France were peculiarly difficult and delicate. There has been some discussion lately about Lord Malmesbury leading the Opposition majority in the Lords, and English noblemen might readily follow so sincere and sensible a politician; but in the revolution of the political wheel other names come uppermost, and the past crumbles away in the using. Lord Carnarvon's promising career as an administrator at the Colonial Office was brought to an abrupt close when, by an act of self-abnegation, he resigned office rather than 'open the floodgates' of democracy. Lord Cairns seems to have given his nature a moral twist by a somewhat unfair use which he had made of a despatch he had signed respecting Jamaica. It is impossible to listen to Lord Carnarvon's intensely nervous, tremulous tones, without feeling that he is a man who would suffer acutely from any 'digs' administered to him, and also quite capable of administering such to others. He has failed, however, in marking out for himself the independent prominent position taken up by Lord Salisbury. We should not wonder if there is a still greater divergence between them. Lord Salisbury is stiffening, perhaps, into a stern, unbending, intellectual Tory; Lord Carnarvon may possibly degenerate into a philosophical Radical. Other names recur in the ranks of either side, *fortisque Gyas fortisque Cloanthus*. The lords connected with the royal household might well have some descriptive pages to themselves. Lord Redesdale, in his official capacity of paid Chairman of Committees, almost deserves a separate sketch. The ladies have never forgiven him for likening their gallery to a casino; but we ourselves are ignorant of casinos, and cannot challenge a comparison dictated by the noble lord's exhaustive knowledge of the subject. The Duke of Cambridge is supposed to be lifted into that serene atmosphere which is above and beyond the region of mere politics. He speaks very rarely, but he can speak well

and tersely on military subjects, and with an evident desire to be the soldier's friend. Lord Shaftesbury, though a Tory in the main, has the same independence in the Upper House which Wilberforce once enjoyed in the Lower. Yet, with all his sincerity, he has pursued in the last two sessions an erratic political course which has been sorely bewildering to his Protestant admirers. It is remembered how he once stood, hat in hand, in the lobby collecting subscriptions for his philanthropical schemes. Yet it came out in the law courts that, with all his organising talents, he could not efficiently overlook his own forty thousand a year landed property. Then we have our novelties and oddities: the noble marquis who owns a port and an island, and has gone over to Rome, and is at this time attending the Ecumenical; and the marquis so French that he is said to be making the Prince Imperial in part his heir; another who takes servant-girls and gutter children into his special favour; a noble duke who has electric communication with the fire-brigade; a noble earl who, on the strength of the Free Trade Hexameters which Macaulay ridicules, makes himself an authority on literary and other questions; and various others, concerning whom we can only use the Latin Grammar's well-bred confession of fatigue—*quos enumerare longum est*.

If we compared the two houses, it would probably be found that there are more men of weight and eminence in the House of Lords than among the faithful Commons. The palm of oratory undoubtedly belongs to the Commons, and there is more general ability there, and ability of a more active kind. But in statesmanship, in law, in diplomacy, in the names that loom largest in contemporary history through great achievements and great careers, the Lords divide or gain the prize of pre-eminence. It is remarkable that in days when democracy, in its last and tallest wave, is breaking in upon us, there has been a measure of development and accession to the strength of the Upper

House. We cannot but regret that the notion of life peerages was suffered to die out last session, and we trust that it will be speedily revived. The House of Lords ought to adorn itself by giving the highest welcome to the highest forms of excellence. The idea of fortune ought not to be inseparable from the idea of nobility. If an illustrious man cannot afford to take a family peerage, he should have a life peerage; and if he cannot afford to take a life peerage, we would have a peerage with a pension presented to him. We might in some respects imitate the French Senate. Why should not a peerage be bestowed on some eminent physician or surgeon, as the Emperor gave one to Nélaton? Within the last generation we have seen peerages bestowed for the first time on men of letters; and if we would really meet aright the tendencies of our times, there would be a development in the same direction. Nor will this be sufficient, unless we can inspire the majority of our hereditary legislators with a higher measure of public and patriotic spirit, and with a healthy zest for public work. That indisposition to hard work, which is a growing and saddening feature of our times, is not least manifest among the members of the House of Lords. The motto, *noblesse oblige*, should be felt with double force in our days. Our politicians must look upon Parliament as something more than the best club in all London. The high days of debate will not atone for the persistent neglect of public business. The Lords will have no reason to complain that public work is not duly provided for them. If any wrong exists in this matter, a remedy will doubtless be applied. The House of Commons, although the transfer of the election petitions to judges has released them from the worst part of their jurisdiction, is still greatly too plethoric, and requires depletion. We do not see any necessity for the general moan that is made when any extraordinarily clever man is 'pitchforked' or 'kicked up stairs,' by a malign destiny, into the House of Lords. He will find his use and vocation

there. Let the man be the honour of his vocation, and the vocation will be the honour of the man. Tacitus, in a passage often quoted, once sketched out in ideal the outline of our three estates of the realm, but thought that a constitution so perfect could only exist in theory, but could never be realised in history. It is our happiness that, whether through wisdom or accident, this has been wrought out for us by our

ancestors, and that we have an order, as Burke said, the Corinthian capital of society; an order perpetually recruited from the wealth, intelligence, virtue of the masses; an order the balancing, moderating, judicial power in the state, if this political good fortune is not marred by the vast organic changes in the constitution already made or looming in the doubtful future.



RIDDLES OF LOVE.

CHAPTER VIII.

A MYSTERIOUS HOUSEHOLD—AN OLD FRIEND—AND A LETTER.

WHAT a wonderful divinity hedges a householder in London! What an abject person, compared with a householder, is a lodger! Such, at least, is the opinion of householders who have lodgers, notwithstanding that the lodgers—singly in some cases, collectively in others—pay the expenses of the house. And it is curious, the confidence with which lodgers commit themselves to the custody of persons whom they know nothing about, upon the mere assumption that they are payers of rent and taxes. Captain Pomberton did as most persons do who need accommodation of the kind. He made no inquiries, and surrendered himself to the mercy of the 'people of the house,' and, come what might, he and his daughter were bound to them for a month.

Both the captain and May felt a sensation that they were incurring considerable hazard as regarded their comforts—and it might be something more—when they re-entered their new abode, in the fast-deepening twilight, and made an attempt to feel at home. Their baggage was too heavy for the bulk of it to be disposed of that night, so it was left in the conservatory—by courtesy so called—where the other boxes still remained, and the relics of 'somebody's dinner' still figured among the flowers. The staircase, however, was cheerful, being well lit up: and the 'sitting-room' was more cheerful still, for it was in a state of complete illumination, not only with gas, but with pink candles that the mysterious maid had placed in every available position. She was a wonderful girl, that maid, and threw herself into decorative enterprises with an energy which exhausted her, I fear, for merely useful efforts. The dinner certainly did not convey a favourable impression of the resources of the establishment. That it should consist

of nothing more than mutton cutlets and a tart—it was too late, it appeared, to get fish—mattered little to either of the diners. But neither of them could understand why the cutlets should be cooked only at one end, and should come up with such very black gravy. The explanation offered was that the fire was low, but why it should not have been high was not explained. There seemed to be no reason, too, why the china should be all cracked and handleless, and that it should be of different patterns; why the handles of the knives should all turn round on their blades; and why 'Britannia' should rule the spoons and forks so unmistakably as it did. Appeals upon all these subjects were made to the young lady attendant, accompanied by a delicate request from May that she would communicate her name in order that she might be addressed with more convenience.

The young person in question answered the last inquiry in full, disposing of the others in a summary manner.

'My name,' she said, 'is Miss Leonora Mannering; and Mrs. Grandison locked up all the best dinner things before she went out.'

As it was presumable that Mrs. Grandison was sometimes at home, and might sooner or later be found in company with her keys, the reply was accepted as conveying consolation for the present and hope for the future; and the father and daughter elected to laugh at the arrangements, though the Captain decided that wine—his was part of a small stock that he had prudently brought with him—had not its natural taste when taken out of a little tumbler, looking very blue in contrast with the white tablecloth, and so contrived, that when standing on its end, it went curiously aside, like the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

The tart, which had come from the pastrycook's, was irreproachable, and compensated to some extent for the defects of the cutlets; so the Pembertons managed to get comparatively cheerful by the time dinner was over; and when they were presently supplied with some really good coffee, the manufacture of Miss Leonora Mannerling—who, it seems, cultivated special and unexpected accomplishments—they found themselves in sufficiently good spirits to seek the evening breeze at the window and talk about their plans for the future, including, of course, the business which had brought them to town. Of this, we shall hear presently; but I may mention at once that it had reference to the necklace lost at the ball. Captain Pemberton was very anxious to hear some news—not of the missing property, for of that there was no trace—but of some unpleasant business in which the accident had involved him. He had sent a messenger, before sitting down to dinner, to a friend in Park Lane, and awaited the answer with some impatience as the hour grew late. May had not heard the friend's name when the letter was despatched, and as her father was disposed to be reserved to her on many subjects, she never asked him for more confidence than he volunteered. So, although she knew the object of the letter, she knew no more; and she was not a little startled when, after pacing the room to an extent which would have driven a nervous companion to distraction, he suddenly sat down and muttered, half to himself—

'I sincerely trust that Halidame is in town.'

'Halidame!' exclaimed May; 'surely you have not seen—' then she paused, remembering the warning given her at Shuttleton, which she feared to disregard, although not binding herself to observe it.

Captain Pemberton did not seem to observe her confusion, for he merely said—

'Yes, I told you, did I not, that I had sent to an old friend of mine, Sir Norman Halidame, to help me out of my difficulty?'

Sir Norman Halidame! He could not be her Shuttleton acquaintance, who had no title. But he was probably a relative, and might be connected with the mystery referred to. Such was May's hurried train of thought; but she only made a careless reply, intimating that her father had not previously mentioned the name of the friend.

Keeping a secret is a very demoralizing responsibility. Poor May, with the best of intentions, was in a fair way of realizing the popular idea of a Jesuit.

A pause ensued. Father and daughter were buried in thought, when, on a sudden, was heard a sound to which they had already become accustomed. That is to say, the staircase shook as if with a succession of heavy bounds upon its not very solid structure.

'That girl comes up stairs like forty elephants and fifty tigers,' remarked Captain Pemberton, with cynical pleasantry.

May laughed, and remarked that her father was very acute in assigning the exact number of animals, and the different proportions of the two; but before her father could defend his position, the door was burst open, and Leonora—I beg her pardon, she always liked to be called Miss Leonora—descended upon the room like an avalanche, but differing in one respect from that species of visitation, for she bore a letter in her hand.

'I am so sorry, sir,' she said, as well as her broken breath would allow her, 'that my little brother should have been so long gone; but he had to go first to the theatre to take Mrs. Grandison her new dress, which she had forgotten, and sent for in ever such a hurry.'

Both the captain and his daughter thought that her dress was rather an odd thing for a lady to forget when she went to the theatre, as it is the custom with most people to apparel themselves before rather than after their arrival at places of amusement.

Leonora seemed to guess what was passing in their minds, for she added quickly—

'Of course you understand—I

thought you knew. Mrs. Grandison is the celebrated actress, and she appears to-night in a new part.'

This was an unexpected piece of information; but the captain made no remark. He was anxious about the letter; and as soon as Leonora had bounded out of the room and had begun her forty elephantine and fifty tigerine movement down the staircase, he was engaged with its contents.

'So far,' said he, when he had finished, 'all goes well.' And he threw the letter across the table for May to read. It was very brief, and was to this effect—

'Park Lane, Tuesday.

'MY DEAR PEMBERTON,

'I cannot tell you until to-morrow how glad I am to hear from you again. Certainly, I shall be at home at the time you mention, and delighted to shake you by the hand.

'Ever yours sincerely,

'NORMAN HALIDAME.'

CHAPTER IX.

SIR NORMAN HALIDAME AT HOME.—
TWO VISITORS.

Sir Norman Halidame was the proudest baronet in England. I am not sure why Sir Norman Halidame was prouder than other baronets, but I suppose it was for the reason that he had very little money and came of a very great family—a romantic combination of conditions which I fancy is favourable to making the most of oneself. It may be that his personal advantages had something to do with his pride. For without any vulgar excess of beauty, Sir Norman was unmistakably of what is called 'good style.' He had a noble bearing and a clear blue eye; his manner was at once bold and soft; and his graces and accomplishments gave an unflinching charm to his society. It was known that he might have married an heiress any day. But up to the time at which I write, when he must have been considerably past thirty, Sir Norman had not evinced any wish to wed. I fancy that he would have scorned the idea as an abstract proposition, and waited for

the instinct of his heart to direct him to the concrete object. Even the pecuniary inducement was not sufficiently strong to be compelling. If his income was feeble his credit was robust; and, albeit living under the shade of certain responsibilities, he had never experienced what our late courtly Premier calls 'that ignoble melancholy which arises from pecuniary embarrassment.'

From the time when he left college, came of age and into his title, Sir Norman had led a careless and somewhat continental life, and in the course of his travels had sojourned even in the far East. His wandering habits imparted peculiar interest to his occasional presence in London during the height of the season, when he swept like a meteor across the fashionable firmament.

Surely enough has been said of Sir Norman to recommend him to your notice, even though we find him not in form for receiving visits, as is likely to be the case with a gentleman who has prematurely left the Park and sought the shelter of his dressing-room to write some neglected letters before going out to dinner.

The mansion to which we are admitted is, as you may suppose, in Park Lane. It is a charming place—not at all like a bachelor's, and so full of marqueterie, Dresden china, looking-glasses, and flowers, as to afford certain indications of a lady's taste. But the fact of the matter shows how delusive certain indications may be. The taste was Sir Norman's own, and if it was feminine I suppose he was a little feminine also. At any rate he never lived in a house which a lady might not inhabit with that dignity which her sex derives from the presence of elegance and the evidence of refinement; and if he condescended to explanation on the point he would tell you that a bachelor has as much right as a Benedict to gratify his eyesight.

Thus it came that Sir Norman chose to dress and write his private letters in an apartment which was meant by the person who furnished the house for a lady's boudoir; and it is there that we find him on the

afternoon in question—that of the day succeeding the Pembertons' arrival in their dingy lodgings, doomed to disheartening dinners, and the ministrations of the bounding Leonora.

The baronet was sitting at a small table which had been wheeled near a window overlooking the Park, and was dashing off the dozenth of the many missives which were on his mind.

He had just concluded the despatch in question, and was meditating another when his valet entered the room in the stealthy manner peculiar to his class.

'A person below, Sir Norman,' insinuated the man, 'wishes to speak to you.'

'You should not call a gentleman a person,' replied the baronet, with some asperity. 'It is Captain Pemberton, I suppose. Show him up at once.'

And Sir Norman rose to meet his old friend; but before he could get to the door Martin interposed, with all due deprecation of himself—

'No, Sir Norman,' replied the man; 'it is not a gentleman, leastways not one of *our* gentlemen. It is the Indian party who has been twice before to see you here.'

And Martin presented the visitor's card, on which was inscribed—

'Baboo Ramchunder Nellore.'

The baronet looked angry and a little disgusted.

'How the man persecutes me!' he muttered; 'well, I suppose I must see him.'

And Sir Norman resumed his seat at the table like a man who sits doggedly down to undergo an unpleasant interview.

A minute after the visitor glided into the room with a step even more stealthy than that of the attendant. He was a fine-looking man, clad in the flowing garments worn by his class in Bengal, slightly adapted in material to the sterner climate of Europe. On his head he wore the inevitable *puggree*, but his feet were encased in English shoes, after the fashion of so many of his countrymen who aspire to the European privilege of not having to leave their slippers on the threshold be-

fore they enter a house. His dress had but little ornament, and he wore very few himself—some small earrings and two or three massive finger-rings completing the equipment. So there was little to distract attention from the face of the wearer, which was bare of all hair except a small moustache upon the upper lip, and indicated craft and cunning of no common order. It was decidedly *snaky* indeed, and was made more repulsive from the fact that the white of the man's eyes was not so much white as yellow.

Baboo Ramchunder Nellore advanced to the baronet, making a low salaam.

'Good day, Baboo,' said Sir Norman, not looking up from a letter to which he was adding the address. 'I can't say that I am very pleased to see you, for you always come upon unpleasant business.'

'Protector of the Poor,' returned the Baboo, who spoke in English, except as regarded his complimentary salutation; 'the humblest of his slaves does but desire a little further light from the shining orb of his generosity.'

The Baboo spoke in the third person, according to oriental etiquette when a superior is addressed; but it will be seen that he dropped the form as he grew more familiar.

'The old story,' sighed the baronet. 'But there is little light left in me; my money is well-nigh exhausted; and your demands, as I have told you again and again, are as unfair as any demands that were ever made upon man.'

'You are harsh to me, *sahib*,' said the Baboo, in a cringing manner. 'I have never made the unhappy events to which my eyes and ears have borne witness a pretext for robbing you of your rupees. I cannot help knowing the accident by which your honour was led into a crime. I say nothing about that. I simply want money, which in your cold country is life, and I ask it of your generosity.'

'And you know well, Baboo,' replied the baronet, sternly, 'that were it not in your power to inflict upon me a great deal of annoyance, if not injury, you would not dare to



(Drawn by Adolphe Claxton.)

THE BARBOO'S VISIT.

[See "Riddle's of Love," Chap. IX.

approach me with such a request. And you ought to believe me when I tell you that I was not the author of the foul deed; that I was mistaken—for—for—somebody else,' added Sir Norman, his voice faltering with suppressed emotion.

'You are cruel, sahib, to suppose that your slave would do you such wrong. But what is your slave to do? He has need of rupees. Your honour has rupees in plenty. You will give some to your slave.'

And the Baboo put on a piteous expression of face, indicative of its owner being borne down by the deepest misfortune, and having no resource except in the generosity of a protector in high position. The eyes of the speaker said a great deal more than his lips upon the occasion.

'Well, Baboo,' returned the baronet, 'I have told you once more my opinion of your motives, and you cannot deny that you once threatened—'

'Ah, sahib!' interrupted the Baboo, supplicatingly, 'do not reproach me. I was sinful when I spoke. I never would betray your honour—unless—unless poverty—the evil genius of your cold country—made me one day forget my duty.'

'So you return to your point,' said Sir Norman, bitterly. 'It is useless to talk to you, I see. Well, well, I have a little blood left, and I suppose one of the few drops must be yours. But I warn you that I am nearly dry.'

The baronet as he spoke took a cheque-book which lay upon the table, and filled up a blank leaf. As he tore it out and handed it to his unwelcome visitor he added—

'Will that keep you quiet?'

The Baboo glanced at the sum indicated in the corner before replying; then he said in a tone of deep reverence and self-abasement—

'The Lord of Life is himself again—he feels the distress of his slave.'

'Well, well,' rejoined the baronet, 'then take it, and do not come to me again, or you will find one of these days that I am deaf even to your distress.'

The Baboo smiled with his yellow eyes, which looked sarcastically in-

credulous. But their owner, who seemed to know exactly what his eyes were doing, and to have power to keep them in order when he pleased, retreated the next moment into a tone of abject servility, under cover of which he salaamed his way out of the apartment.

The Baboo had scarcely disappeared when another visitor was announced.

'Captain Pemberton,' said Martin.

'My dear fellow,' said the baronet, rising, and shaking the captain heartily by the hand, 'I am delighted to see you again.'

Captain Pemberton was as pleased to see Sir Norman as Sir Norman was pleased to see him. They had both been long absent from the scenes in which they were accustomed to meet, though Sir Norman, as we have heard, returned to them from time to time. As for the captain he explained that he had been living in retirement for years past, and found the old world which he had inhabited as new to him as if he had been a Rip Van Winkle and had just come out of the mountain.

'And you are now going to make up for your thirty years' sleep,' said the baronet, with a gaiety which I fear was forced for the sake of his friend. For Sir Norman began to feel that he might want a mountain to retire to in his turn.

'No, no, Norman—I used to call you Norman, you remember,' said the captain, shaking his head; 'I shall never renew my dandy days, even in the character of a fogey'—and he glanced rather sadly into a glass with a Sèvres china frame, in the design of which Cupids were largely represented, at his grizzled hair, but still handsome aquiline face—'no, I shall never re-enter our old world. It is too late, and I have too many cares upon me. A poor half-pay fellow like me can never compete with our old companions.'

'You have some trouble to tell me,' said Sir Norman, with intuitive perception; 'we will discuss it with a cigar—Martin!'

Had Martin been listening to the conversation—which can scarcely be

supposed in the case of a person of his respectability—he could not have appeared more promptly than he did; and had he felt the intensest sympathy with his master's requirements he could not more speedily have obeyed the mandate of that gentleman for hock, soda water, and Havannahs.

Captain Pemberton was not superior to these inducements to tell his tale; and taking a weed to his mouth with the tenderness which its quality deserved, and giving the combination beloved of Byron a turn at the same time, he began to tell his tale with a confidence which would not, I fancy, have been otherwise at his command.

As became a man who respects himself under such circumstances, he did not prepare the way with explanations, but came to the point at once.

'I need not tell you, Norman, that when a man is in a difficulty it is nearly always about money.'

'Unless it happens to be about love,' suggested the baronet.

'No, no,' said Captain Pemberton, rather sadly. 'I have done with that. The simple fact is, that I want three hundred pounds—or rather more'—people always want rather more than they must have—'and I want you to help me to it.'

Sir Norman laughed.

'My dear Pemberton,' he said, 'of course I guessed that money was your want; but I am surprised that you should distress yourself about so small an amount.'

'I am glad you look upon it in that light,' returned Pemberton; 'but the amount is not small to me. I am out of the way of dealing with sums of money even such as that; and a sudden claim upon my purse has caused me a great deal of embarrassment. Let me tell you all about it.'

And the captain told the tale of the necklace, as told to him by his daughter. He disapproved altogether, he added, of her appearance in a borrowed ornament; but May had acted so innocently in the matter—she had been so forced into acceptance of her friend's attention—that he could not blame her, and

he had forbidden her, almost with sternness, when he saw the distress which the accident occasioned her, from blaming herself. However, the thing could not be found, notwithstanding that every possible means was adopted for the purpose, and his own duty became clear—to pay to Mr. Cartwright the value of the lost property without delay. When he declared his intention to take this course, Lucy, who took a selfish pleasure in being generous, would not hear of his doing anything of the kind. The necklace, she said, was hers, and she would settle the question by making May a present of it. 'Indeed,' she added, with desperate wilfulness, 'she never intended to take it back, and it was May's own fault if she had not understood the transaction in that light.' But, as Pemberton observed to Sir Norman, 'What was he to do? It was impossible for him to allow his daughter to accept an obligation of the kind from a young lady of eighteen, whose father, moreover, had no idea of countenancing such magnanimity.' For when the captain asked him what sum would be sufficient compensation for the loss, he coldly answered that the necklace was valued at three hundred pounds.

'I had no resource, therefore,' continued Pemberton, 'but to come to London and raise the money, and you, I felt sure, would be willing to help me.'

Sir Norman looked as distressed as he felt at the appeal.

'What an unhappy man I am, Pemberton,' he said, gloomily, 'not to have it in my power to take up this book'—pointing to the cheque-book on the table—'and write you an order for the sum at once without a word or a thought about it! But I have nothing like that sum at my command—otherwise I should have no question about *sparing* it—for just at present I can get on almost as well without money as with it. But this cannot be. An extortionate rascal has just brought me almost to the extent of my tether. But this I can of course do—get you the money from somebody else.'

'My dear Norman,' cried Pemberton, grasping his hand, 'that is all I dreamt of asking you. I am well aware that you are not rich just now, and all I propose is that you will send me to a man who will do the needful in—in the old way.' And the captain sighed as he remembered days when he was a great deal too familiar with transactions of the kind referred to.

'If that is all,' said Sir Norman, 'the thing is easily done. My credit is still tolerably good, and one of these days I shall be able to settle my affairs. Meanwhile yours, as I have said, is a small matter. I laughed just now at your anxiety about it, and it was only as my sympathy warmed whilst you were telling your tale, that I got gloomy in thinking how different my position ought to be as to the means of helping you. But never mind,' he added, resuming his usual air of gaiety, 'I vote for driving out and getting the money at once. Mopus, I think, would be the best man for our purpose, and just now we are tolerably sure to find him at home. You will dine with me afterwards at my club, won't you?—no nonsense, no objections after all these years—I want to have a talk about old times.'

Captain Pemberton agreed to both proposals. But it was with some reluctance that he sent a note over to May, saying that she must not expect him at dinner; for he remembered how lonely she must feel in the mystic mansion where they had taken up their abode.

CHAPTER X.

CAPTAIN PEMBERTON AND HIS DAUGHTER DETERMINE TO MAKE MONEY.

May did not meet her father until next morning, when he told her that his mission to Sir Norman had been successful, and that he would receive the money to pay Mr. Cartwright in the course of the afternoon. May was joyful on hearing the news, and the more so when an actual cheque arrived by a special messenger, and was duly paid into the London agency of the Shut-

tleton bank to the account of the mayor of that town. But the young lady was not quite aware of the responsibilities involved by the transaction in which her father had taken part, and was not a little terrified to hear him say that the payment of the sum back to the person who had advanced it—at stated periods fixed by three bills of different dates—would make such a hole in his resources as to render their means of livelihood a matter of considerable doubt.

'It is plain,' said the captain, 'that I must earn a little money in one way or another, and my next application to my friends must be to find me an opportunity.'

It was very sad for poor May to see her father thus distressed through an accident caused by her, however innocently. But the captain always forbade his daughter to reproach herself, declaring that the loss must be met as a misfortune which could not have been provided against, and that all he had now to consider was, how to repair the damage.

In pursuance of this object he set valiantly to work. First he wrote half a dozen letters to as many old friends and acquaintances, asking for introductions, recommendations, &c., to carry out his ideas of employment; which ideas, it must be confessed, were rather vague; for a retired military man is seldom fit for civil pursuits in which he has to work his way. He may make a figure in parliament; he may do very well on the direction of a bank or an assurance society; he can manage a man's estate for him; he can act as a secretary, or conduct an agency of one kind or another. But apart from the first, which requires property, all positions of the kind are prizes not to be obtained without special influence; for the abilities required are common to most moderately educated men. The difficulty, therefore, consists in the opportunity, and for this Captain Pemberton soon found that he would have to wait. Pending the receipt of answers to his letters—for he had not the courage to apply personally and push his own case—he employed himself with that refuge for

the destitute waiters upon fortune, the advertising columns of the 'Times.' The first useful information which he gained from this source was that there were an enormous number of persons in the same position as himself—gentlemen by position and education who were willing to undertake any duties in which pen and ink and ordinary intelligence could be brought to bear for very moderate stipends. It was remarkable, too, how many of the candidates were retired officers of the army. On the other hand there were a great many applications for persons of the kind, from public companies existent or projected, or commercial enterprises represented to be of a profitable character. But when the captain opened negotiations with any of these he uniformly found that the bestowal of the appointment depended upon the applicant being able to obtain a certain number of directors, take a certain number of shares, or put down a certain sum of money. In every case it was necessary to buy the position—the position was never to be had for nothing. So after a short time Pemberton became disheartened, and dropped the 'Times' as likely to do him no good.

Meanwhile he received answers to his letters. They were curious for the different ways by which the writers managed to arrive at the same end. One was delighted to hear from his old friend again, would do everything he could for him, but could do nothing now; another was delighted also, but regretted that the kind of influence required was quite out of his way; a third declared that he had had the exact appointment Captain Pemberton would have liked going begging for the last month, and had given it away only the day before yesterday to an impertinent fellow who had been boring him for years; a fourth did not think such a position as Captain Pemberton sought consistent with his character as an officer and a gentleman, and advised him not to take anything of the kind; and so forth. There was scarcely an excuse or an evasion

that was not represented in the course of the correspondence. And not one of these people, with whom the captain had once been on more or less intimate terms, expressed any desire to renew their personal acquaintance. Had they, without hearing of his new requirements, met him in their old haunts, they would have welcomed him with every demonstration of satisfaction, and every man would have asked him to dinner as a matter of course.

Sir Norman alone maintained the old relations with his friend, and not only performed for him the service we have seen, but besieged him with social attentions. Pemberton, however, was chary of accepting hospitalities which he could not return, and would not willingly go about in his former sets while holding his present position. His daughter, too, diverted him from bachelor haunts, for she was companionless in their outlandish lodgings; and as to introducing her into society among her own sex, in London, the idea was not to be entertained for a moment.

May, too, you may be sure, had her share of trouble and anxiety. She had a vague idea, like her father, that she might work, and make money, as she had heard of young ladies doing—more from books, however, than from actual experience. Of course her first idea was to be a governess; but her general impression, gained from the books aforesaid, was, that all persons who employed governesses were vulgar, sordid wretches, who insulted, oppressed, and underpaid them, and would not let anybody flirt with them; while on the other hand all governesses were beautiful, refined, highly-cultured girls, of far better family than their employers, for whose bullying they were only consoled in the end by marrying people of fabulous property and position.

This kind of career, May settled in her own mind, was open to her; but what would her father say? To judge by the advertisements, all young ladies seeking situations of this kind, when not daughters of clergymen, were daughters of offi-

cers in the army. But her father was not likely to relish the idea of his daughter descending to duties of the kind. Besides, how could she leave him, lonely as he was? She decided, however, that she might give lessons in the morning without much objection on her father's part, or interference with his comforts. But on searching the 'Times' to find pupils she gained very much the same experience as Captain Pemberton had done in the course of his investigations. The number of young ladies—daughters of clergymen or officers in the army of course—who were willing to take pupils upon similar conditions, was almost beyond belief. There were a few applications, however, for morning governesses, which were encouraging, at any rate to the extent that she had the same chance of success as other candidates. The result of her applications, however, was by no means assuring. To the majority of her communications she received no answer; and when negotiations were opened they always broke down through some objection made on the other side. She was too young for some people; others, with whom she had personal interviews, objected to her at first sight—I suspect on account of her beauty, for there are a great many ladies who consider that beauty is an impertinence in dependent 'young persons,' and not even quite respectable. It seemed plain that her face was not destined to be her fortune as far as the business of a governess was concerned. Only once did it seem that her appearance was likely to be in her favour. This was when she answered a peculiarly tempting advertisement—there seemed so much to get and so little to do, and so pleasant a home in prospect—purporting to come from a widower with two children. The answers were to be made in person, and May presented herself as a candidate. She saw the widower, but there were no signs of the children, and the widower made himself so gratuitously agreeable that poor May indignantly left the house.

This little piece of experience frightened her from future endea-

vours involving personal interviews. For between austere ladies who seemed to see something wrong about her, and impressionable gentlemen who appeared not disinclined to justify the conclusion, May became rather disgusted, and at last decided that she had better abandon her idea of obtaining employment through the medium of advertisements in the newspapers.

Another resource suggested itself—the novels through which she had gained most of her views of what is called the world again gave her the idea. She would occupy her talents as an artist—she had learned drawing at Minerva House—and would make little pictures in water-colours, and sell them in shops where they put such things in the windows. This was a great idea. When it occurred to her she did not exactly think her fortune made, as more impulsive young ladies might have thought; but she had a hope of earning a little money by the means, and so helping her father. Helping her father was indeed the entire object she now had in view. She was quite prepared to be fond of society; was not insensible, as we have seen, to being admired, nor quite incapable of admiring in return, in a dreamy way which might mean much or little for all she knew. But her present purpose was to be practical; so during the long mornings and afternoons when her father was away on expeditions of his own she carried out her idea as far as the first half of it was concerned, that is to say, producing the pictures. But she soon found that it was in the other half of the idea—the disposal of her productions—that the difficulty consisted. The dealers would have nothing to do with them. They were very clever—this was admitted—but mere studies, and not the sort of things likely to attract the public. May was discouraged, but not yet defeated. The result, however, of further experiments completed her final discomfiture. She had evidently no chance in art; so a vision of pupils again forced itself upon her fancy. This time, however, she determined to have nothing to do with

advertisements; and it occurred to her that she might get some introductions through the influence of Mrs. Grandison.

CHAPTER XL

A GLANCE AT THE PAST AND PRESENT
OF MRS. GRANDISON AND MISS LEONORA MANNERING.

Mrs. Grandison, as you have already learned from the bounding Leonora, was the landlady of the house where the Pembertons were lodging. But she might have been a myth for all the evidence they had of her existence. She was out every night at the theatre, and when not required at the theatre in the afternoon, was understood to be taking rest, with which she was usually in arrears, or studying new parts. She never attended to the affairs of the house, and left them entirely to her confidential retainer. I use the word 'retainer' advisedly, in preference to the word 'servant,' which would mean too little, and to the word 'friend,' which would mean too much. Leonora never considered herself as a servant. Such an epithet might be applied to the kitchen maid who called herself a cook, but never to Leonora. To be sure, the latter performed the duties of a servant, but it was in an amateur way, and intended to put the persons to whom she ministered under a sense of obligation. She was willing to serve, in fact, but it was in the chivalric sense of the obligation. 'Ich Dien' would have been her motto, had she only known it. For Mrs. Grandison she would have gone through fire and water and worse elements had they been in the way. But not in the sense of the labourer being worthy of his hire or any such degrading condition. To Mrs. Grandison—Leonora never called the lady 'her mistress'—she acknowledged a kind of feudal superiority, founded upon personal attachment cemented by custom, and she was quite willing to accept, in her relations with that lady, a position of honourable obedience. To Mrs. Grandison's allies—in which light she looked upon the lodgers—

she also owned fealty to a certain extent. But in the duties, direct and indirect, rendered to her chief she was always careful to keep her own dignity unimpaired. The assertion of this independent position was marked by her manner and conversation, besides being illustrated in her dress, which, as we have seen, was characterized by certain relaxations from the severity enjoined by ordinary employers upon ordinary dependants. Many mistresses might have objected to her favourite mantle; many more would have complained of her habitual bonnet. But Miss Mannering, although she had never read Burke, had well-defined ideas about keeping alive 'even in servitude itself the spirit of an exalted freedom.' And the mantle and bonnet she considered instinctively—for she never considered otherwise—as symbols of the position she was entitled to assume. Some of her commentators—and she had many you may be sure—insinuated that she further realized the ideas of Burke, and was a 'cheap defence of nations' as far as the domestic establishment was concerned; or in other words that her mistress was not particular about paying the *honoraria* due to her in the coin of the realm. But suppositions such as these are low, and I decline to have anything to do with them.

But the suggestion leads me to Mrs. Grandison herself. This lady was an actress of standing on the stage almost equal to the years of her life. It was said in her circle that she had 'gone on,' or rather been taken on, while still in long clothes, and being once in a pantomime mistaken for a property baby, had narrowly escaped being crushed in a laundress's mangle by the clown, and was actually placed in extreme peril at the hands of the same comic gentleman by being shut up in a chest of drawers. It is certain that she was seen at a remarkably early period of her career as the girl in 'Pizarro' and the boy in 'William Tell,' and it is also certain that she had never been off the stage, except through accidental circumstances, from that time. By degrees she had grown up a beautiful

girl; had been admired as beautiful girls are everywhere, and tempted as beautiful girls are, especially on the stage. For years she had been a favourite and a pet of the public, and she retained her popularity still. The Paragon Theatre, with which she had been connected during the last twenty years, could not do without her. She was looked for in every principal piece, and was as much a matter of course as the prompter. Her range of character was always wide, and it grew wider as time progressed—as she began to sink the woman in the actress, and to think of the praise she inspired as only part of the play. Hers had been a happy life, as most lives are that have been devoted to the boards. The profession is considered unsatisfactory by many of her sex; but those who look upon it in this light are not thoroughly professional. They seek the stage as a means, not as an end, and have an idea that the legitimate conclusion of a successful career is to marry a marquis, or at any rate to gain a position apart from the theatre. Mrs. Grandison had no ideas of the kind. She was an actress, and desired to, be nothing more; and although keen in appreciation of her regular holidays—like the members of the profession generally—her real happiness was in harness. She was like a war horse, and would cry, Ha, ha, among the captains and scent the battle afar off; and when no longer strong enough to lead, would be contented to fall into the ranks and charge with the rest.

It was to this position that Mrs. Grandison was fast arriving at the time to which I refer. Parts were rarely written for her in these latter days; but it must be a very clever piece indeed which did not contain a part to suit her. In the course of her dramatic career she had undergone almost every kind of vicissitude incidental to the boards. She had been the young *ingénue* in innumerable dramas, coming unscathed from the ordeal of unprincipled suitors, marrying the men of her choice and living very happy ever afterwards, to a most fatiguing extent. She had been a jealous in-

triguante upon almost as many occasions, and had suffered scores of such humiliations as the stage seldom fails to bring upon persons of the class. She had been for a long course of years treated with an amount of heartless cruelty which real life, to do it justice, never inflicts upon the same person. She had been betrayed, indeed, and ruined, beyond the possibility of individual experience. And notwithstanding all these trials she had the satisfaction of doing an immense deal of good by example in her time. Indeed, as her career developed, she was placid, more and more in the way of rendering disinterested service to people not always deserving. At one time she was a gipsy, keeping watch over a favourite family, helping them to their rights, either as regarded money, or the discovery of some lost child who turned out to be the heiress. At another she was a neglected housekeeper, who rendered similar service in a different way. At times she was a mature beauty who beat immature beauties out of the field by matchless fascination of manner—a favourite rôle of hers, by-the-way, as she advanced in life, and one upon which she brought all her energies to bear. Nor did she disdain the part of a faithful page, or even a female sailor, when afforded a sufficiently favourable opportunity by a really effective drama. It was whispered that she was once, in the latter character, very nearly dancing a hornpipe, which it was thought would help the interests of the piece, and was dissuaded from the demonstration only by the consideration of the manager, who declared that it would detract from her proper position in the profession—and people are very particular in theatres in drawing nice distinctions between different kinds of 'business.' However, she had been the heroine of a great many sensational effects short of this extreme. She thought nothing of firing pistols at pirates, bringing the objects of her affections—male or female, according to the exigencies of her part—down rope ladders, and had once, failing to fight her way across a bridge,

bounded into the boiling current below and been rescued in the form of a stuffed representative which could endure any amount of knocking about. To this kind of sensational effect, indeed, she was, in these latter days, greatly given up; and the red-letter nights in her professional calendar were those in which, as the mature beauty above mentioned, she captivated a marquis of the old school, or when she played the part of an actress and was able to idealize the character she loved, and show how superior 'the poor player' might be to the rich people in real life who are apt to misjudge her. There was nothing, perhaps, to equal the effect of Mrs. Grandison's rendering of the qualities of a faithful servant, except her rendering of the qualities of a magnanimous queen. Ill-natured critics—there are such persons in these days, though they express their opinions principally in private—said that she did not make sufficient distinction between the two. But this was mere prejudice. Mrs. Grandison had seen her best days as regarded looks; and when actresses have reached that stage there are always some critics who, under pretence of being candid, venture to say unpleasant things. The result of my own observation is that Mrs. Grandison played a queen quite as well as she did a housemaid—that the sceptre came to her quite as naturally as the mop. She was more like a queen indeed than a queen ever is, and housemaids would never be out of situations if they were all like her. And as for the mature beauty who awakens the highest sentiments of the amiable, though previously misguided, nobleman, I should like to see anybody who would venture to beat her in that—the part which, as I have hinted, was the pride and glory of her present position on the stage.

Mrs. Grandison's private character, too, justified the good opinion entertained of her by the public. As Miss Flossy Sinclair she had won hearts to any extent, and had she believed a hundredth part that was said to her in the days of her youth, so far as affection was concerned,

she would have had no need, at this later period, to have represented faithful housemaids, magnanimous queens, or mature beauties bringing erring noblemen to a sense of their better nature. Still less would she have been reduced to fight pirates, rescue people down rope ladders, or make sensation leaps from perilous bridges above, upon the faith of safe mattresses below. But Flossy Sinclair was not such a fool as she was supposed to be—or even as she engagingly looked. She was incredulous to hothouse plants in the way of suitors, and when she married chose a wild flower, like herself, in the person of a stage manager. Her choice was prosperous for a time. But the stage manager was found eventually to be not quite what a stage manager ought to be. He neglected his business and lost his position; neglected his wife and lost her also. For when Mrs. Grandison found what the stage manager was capable of becoming she declined to be managed by him any longer. So she lived apart—there was no need for public scandal—and her husband entered tractably into the arrangement. Sometimes he got employment at theatres in the old way; sometimes he did not, and in a way which became an old way in course of time, he came to her for a share of her earnings. She supplied him when she was able and refused him when she was not; and the latter occasions were not unfrequent, for she had relatives of her own who might be called poor rather than rich, and who made sad havoc with her resources. So it was that her not illiberal salary at the Paragon was swallowed up almost before it was due, and she was induced to let Leonora make what she could of her unoccupied rooms in order to keep the establishment going.

Hence it was that Leonora became mistress of the situation to the extent we have seen, and her natural instincts for command became abnormally developed. Leonora claimed to be a 'superior' girl, compared with the usual class of domestics, and always insisted that 'her family' was just as good as anybody else's, though she ad-

mitted that they were not prepared to maintain their position, and were waiting for some vague period of existence, which she called 'happier days,' in which they could assert themselves. Meanwhile the young lady accommodated herself to present conditions in a cheerful spirit—so cheerful indeed that the chance of a change never seemed to occur to her; and I suspect that her 'superior' claims to gentility were not meant quite in earnest, but were born of her imaginative qualities, tempered by her quick wit and perception, and supported by a healthy audacity which distinguished her purposes as well as her deportment. If her family were really of such distinguished consideration as Leonora led you to believe, its decadence must have set in for some time past. For Leonora, besides a little brother, had a large mother domesticated in the house; and the latter lady, who inclined congenially to the neighbourhood of the kitchen, never endorsed her daughter's pretensions with even the feeblest acquiescence. On the contrary, she was humble to any extent; seemed to consider herself a person who might hope for comfort but was quite out of the pale of prosperity; and always received the intelligence of other people realizing a share of the pleasures of life—or, as she called it, 'enjoying themselves'—with abject philosophy concentrated in the reflection that 'it was well for they as could afford it.' Her daughter seemed better educated than herself, but that impression was due to her ready wit; and on the whole I am not inclined to think that the *Mannerings* were quite such a great family as Leonora made out. If they ever came over with the *Conqueror*—as I am sure Leonora would have alleged had she ever had an inkling of that dominant Norman's existence—they must have gone back again very soon, and been lost in the lapse of ages. And it may be that they were destined to be found again in the person of Leonora, who disported herself in a manner which might be supposed to characterize a duchess of neglected culture but impetuous

temperament, finding herself reduced to a sphere of life whose relations to the world of society might be considered bounded by the area of the house in Brompton Row.

CHAPTER XII.

MRS. GRANDISON DISCOVERS A NEW PLANET.

May found upon inquiry of Leonora that an interview with Mrs. Grandison was not to be expected as a matter of course. When questioned upon the subject the Bounding One shook her head. 'Madame came home so late, and was so engaged until she went out again, that an intrusion upon her was difficult.' Leonora, by-the-way, always referred to her mistress as Madame when talking to people with whom she was in familiar relations (and such relations she always established at an early period of acquaintance), with a vague notion, apparently, that actresses and foreigners are the same thing, and must be designated accordingly. 'But she would manage the matter for Miss Pemberton as soon as possible, and hoped, in the meantime, that Miss Pemberton was not going to complain about the lodgings, because Madame had nothing to do with them, and she (Leonora) was the person to consult if anything was wanting.'

May was rather amused at the girl's suspicion of a slight to her dignity. 'She had nothing of the kind to say to Mrs. Grandison. Indeed, as regarded the house, she had said everything she wished to say to Leonora.' And this May had done, it may be here mentioned, with satisfactory effects. For after the first two or three days the domestic discomforts had been amended by appliances and means which answered every requirement; though the fact that the articles were all painfully new made Miss *Mannerings*' previous explanation concerning them look rather inconsistent; indeed, May could not help noticing that the improvements had not been made

until her father had made a considerable advance upon the first month's rent.

Safe in the assurance of Miss Pemberton's amicable intentions, Leonora was true to her promise, and on the following morning bounded up stairs in a modified manner—like only thirty elephants and forty tigers this time—and told May that if she made haste she would be able to see Madame before that lady went out.

May did make haste, you may be sure, and found Mrs. Grandison in the back parlour, which she made her boudoir.

You may guess what kind of person the actress was in appearance from the fact that one of the chief charms which she found in existence was due to the strong resemblance which she bore to the portraits of Marie Antoinette. And the peculiarity, I may here mention, led her to illustrate some of the leading characteristics of the lamented queen. Thus she never failed in private life—and in public life too when consistent with her part—to adopt the well-known *coiffure* of the royal lady in question; while, from a habit, I fancy, of identifying herself with the same personage, her deportment became adapted to the lights and shades of a career of splendour and misfortune. Thus in her lighter moments she was the brilliant Dauphiness thinking of nothing more important than pleasure, and it may be a little innocent flirtation; while in her more serious moods she was the chastened queen taking leave of her husband; while at any time of extra trouble—when her own husband, for instance, was particularly extortionate—she was evidently prepared, on the shortest notice, to show how a queen could die.

The actress looked very grand in her Marie Antoinette *coiffure*, tinged slightly with grey, which gave the appropriate appearance of powder—by no means unbecoming to her slightly worn but still clear complexion, and her bright grey eyes, in which, with the aid of a little imagination, you might realize Lamartine's comparison with 'the

skies of the North and the waters of the Danube.' Their owner's tall and somewhat commanding person, attired in a morning robe open down the front, reposed upon a couch near which was a small table bearing a diminutive breakfast equipage in the style of Watteau, and well adapted for a person who meant luncheon in the style of Francatelli.

Mrs. Grandison's manner, which came to her no doubt naturally for the occasion, was that of a gracious Grand Duchess. She half rose when May presented herself, extended her hand as if conferring rather than seeking a restrained version of 'a shake,' and motioned May to be seated, as if to place her at her ease. May, who evinced complete self-possession in this as in all trying ordeals, seated herself accordingly, and 'after compliments' opened her business in a thoroughly effective manner.

She told the tale, indeed, of her father's misfortunes, and of her own efforts to amend them, with such ease and graphic grace as to engage from the first the attention of her listener, whose sympathy, as the narrative proceeded, evidently warmed, and at last took the form of positive admiration. She forgot the gracious Grand Duchess in the frank homage of the Actress—in which the generosity of the Woman largely mingled, you may be sure.

'My dear child,' she exclaimed, rising from her seat, 'you cannot think how effective that is—it is exactly the kind of thing to take.'

'What is effective—what is to be taken?' asked May, in a state of bewilderment. 'Do you mean that you are likely to introduce me to some pupils?'

'Pupils, my dear,' said the lady, contemptuously, and reminded only by the question of the object of May's application. 'What do you want with pupils—with that face and figure, that voice and intonation—and the thorough stage manner that you have?'

May shrank back at the latter remark, which she was not quite prepared to consider a compliment.

'Do you mean,' she said, this

time rather timidly—'do you mean that pupils would object to my appearance, and—and the rest?'

'Object, my child!' echoed Mrs. Grandison, with an energy in which the theatre strongly asserted itself; 'who could object—except that you were too beautiful.'

'Mrs. Grandison,' said May, as much annoyed as a young lady can be at such an announcement, 'you must not ridicule me; and even were I beautiful, as you say, my beauty should not be a misfortune.'

'Admirable!' cried the actress, thinking nothing of the rebuke, and everything of the manner in which it was conveyed; 'nothing could be better. Would you mind repeating that sentence again?'

May felt disposed to consider herself insulted; but she began to understand the point of view from which Mrs. Grandison spoke; so she only laughed, and said—

'I am not acting, I can assure you. I am simply anxious to take some pupils; and I thought you would be likely to give me some recommendations.'

'And that would I do with all the willingness in life,' said Mrs. Grandison, becoming practical in her turn; 'but I would not advise you to take them. You are too handsome—I speak frankly and sincerely—to be a governess. You would only expose yourself to envy and detraction, and would not succeed after all.'

'But suppose I try,' urged May, imploringly.

'Well,' I repeat, 'don't try. If your object is to make money you can make a hundred times more by means which I can not only point out, but place, I think, at your disposal.'

'Ah! do tell me,' said May, artlessly.

'Charming,' said the actress, going back to criticism; 'but really and truly, my dear Miss Pemberton, I can help you in another manner. You are formed for the boards, and ought to go upon the stage.'

May was fairly frightened at this declaration.

'I tell you,' pursued the actress, 'that I have not been twenty years on the stage myself without knowing the public; and a person who knows the public can make a fortune in many ways—and more particularly at the theatre'—here she sighed slightly, remembering that her own opportunities had not quite led to that result—'at any rate if they have no pecuniary drawbacks to overcome, and have not to support husbands and scores of poor relations.'

'But, Mrs. Grandison, I have never thought of such a—such a career,' pleaded May.

'That is no reason,' pursued the actress, 'why you should not begin. You are very young, scarcely eighteen, I should think, and you have advantages—which I will not again particularize, as I see you are afraid of flattery—that would, unless I much mistake, secure you a very high position in dramatic art. You have education to begin with—you will not mind my telling you that—and would require very little training, except in pure stage business.'

May did not mind flattery half so much as when Mrs. Grandison had first offered it; and a latent idea within her was aroused.

'Supposing, then, that I should consider your kind offer,' she said, after a little pause, 'do you really think that I should succeed?'

'My dear Miss Pemberton, with your person and gifts you could not fail; and women with advantages not comparable to yours have had the world at their feet.'

May began to feel charmed. She thought she had seldom seen so pleasant a person as Mrs. Grandison. And the idea of having the world at her feet! She could not fancy even Shuttleton in that attitude of homage; and she had been not a little admired in Shuttleton, as we have seen.

'I do begin to think, dear madam,' she said, 'that I will try—that is to say, if my father will give his consent.'

'If people waited until their papas gave their consent,' said Mrs. Grandison, 'half the plays on the

stage would break down before the end of the first act; and what is the stage but the mirror of life? You are the chief person in as pretty a little plot as I can fancy, and it is your duty to have respect for dramatic necessities.'

Mrs. Grandison, you see, had cast Captain Pemberton for the 'heavy father' in her imaginary drama, and expected as a matter of course that he would give way, as in dramatic duty bound.

May did not feel so sure of the *dénouement* being so easily brought about. She pictured the Captain's pride, and scarcely dared think how she could break such a project to him.

'Ah!' she said, rather sadly, 'you do not know papa. He will never agree, I fear.'

'My child,' returned Mrs. Grandison, with a dash of the Grand Duchess in her manner for the first time since the beginning of their interview, 'there are cases in which papas must not be allowed to have everything their own way; and you have yet, I fancy, to learn how persons may be reconciled to a repug-

nant idea as they become familiarized with it.'

It had never occurred to May before that there might be circumstances under which—to draw a natural deduction from Mrs. Grandison's proposition—daughters ought to do as they please. The information came to her in a new and striking light. But she dared not think of acting upon it. The actress's other suggestion, about repugnance being overcome by familiarity, seemed much more promising. It gave her at least room to hope. But what disturbed her most, after all, was the idea of making such a bold experiment as the one proposed, even though no obstacles were offered to her own share in it.

It was with decidedly less composure than she had maintained at the beginning of the interview that May thanked her new friend, and left her in a high state of satisfaction, resuming her original character of the gracious Grand Duchess, with a slight infusion of the Magnanimous Queen.

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THE WHITE CAT.

A Peep at Fairland.

ONCE upon a time, between two mighty streams of human population that were always full, sometimes overflowing, and not seldom choked, there lay a dreary and dismal region, inhabited, besides harmless toilers and sickly poor, by ogres, vampires, ghouls, and all sorts of men and women of prey. It was their den, their burrow, their retreat, whence they issued like the tiger, the wolf, or the fox, to take their booty by force or stratagem, and carry it forthwith to their dingy strongholds. Woe to the belated traveller who heedlessly ventured into it after dark! No friendly star twinkled overhead to guide his footsteps on their way; no compass possessed the magnetic power to help him out of that labyrinth. A few *ignes fatui*, glimmering here and there and flickering in the wind, showed the sloughs of despond and the yawning defiles of which the chaos was composed. And to ask the way to escape from it was even more dangerous than to proceed at hazard. The wanderer, under pretence of kindly guidance, might be led into a pitfall or a trap. Not that the breadth of this territory was great, although its length was considerable. But as people lost in a wood often ramble and ramble, returning repeatedly to the very same spot, so here, once in, when fancying you were emerging, you might find yourself again in the identical blind alley which had misled you half an hour before. It was like the walk one takes in a feverish dream, incomprehensible, inextricable. A spell of mystery hung over the district, to which no stranger could discover the clue, or steer his way with certainty across it from one great stream of population to the other. By night by far the safest course was to eschew it utterly and avoid it as completely as you would rocks and quicksands out at sea.

The two great channels of the human tide were not themselves a bit too commodious—nor, indeed, are

they at the present day, although they have been freely tapped. They had inconvenient rapids, eddies, and falls, which impeded the regularity of the ebb and flow. Without being crooked enough to cause complaint of their going the farthest way round from place to place, they were not straight enough to allow the repulse of an enemy, whether a foreign invader or a domestic foe composed of the vampires and brigands uniting in packs. Still they were order and comfort itself when compared with the wilderness intervening. It was strange that this brick-and-mortar jungle should be bounded by highways each under saintly patronage, one called after the benevolent Saint Martin, who divided his cloak with a shivering wretch, the other dedicated to Saint Dionysius, called by the natives (who hate long words) Saint Denis. Neither saint seems to have taken much thought of the social condition of his neighbourhood.

After the lapse of ages there arose a potentate who believed that straight lines constituted a talisman; and he liked them not only straight but broad and long. He preferred them to all the pentacles, triangles, and other mystic diagrams in the world. So one day he drew a broad, long, straight line from one end of the unclean labyrinth to the other, and cleared away all the rubbish that fell in his way. The ghouls and vampires howled and threatened when light was thus let into the heart of their hiding-place; but honest folk went up and down rejoicing. It was a famous change. Columns of air and infantry, not to mention charges of cavalry, could sweep along it from top to bottom, without the slightest let or hindrance. It gave excellent opportunities for a game of ball—perhaps that's why they called it the *Boulevard of Sebastopol*, *boule* being one of their words for 'ball'—especially the game of ball most usually played by artillery.

Not far from the new line is a

spacious building full of curiosities appertaining to arts and trades, the space between which and the boulevard was also swept clean, and turned into a garden—the garden of Arts and Trades; only, as it was a novelty to the aborigines, they stole one of our words, and called it a 'square.' Nor is it indeed an ordinary garden where flowers bud and blossom in slow routine, but rather a garden of Fairyland, befitting another Fairyland hard by. In winter it is a mournful waste enough—less mournful, however, and less a waste than sundry other squares that we have heard of. But as soon as spring has breathed upon it, its aspect is changed as if by a miracle. In a single night it will be filled with bright blooms, planted by elves, who disappear before mortals are astir. As soon as those blooms begin to fade the elves replace them with others of different shape and hue. A parterre that was pink yesterday may be blue to-morrow; next month it may blaze with scarlet and gold.

Of this square nobody is allowed a key—because there are no railings to keep anybody out. Everybody who can find sitting or standing room (which is not always easy on bright summer evenings) may enter and gaze at the brilliant flowers and foliage, and breathe the perfume they exhale. And don't people come by twos and threes, and half-dozens, and scores? Nursemaids or nursing mothers, in snowy and fantastic caps, or with gaudy handkerchiefs twisted round their heads and spread over their shoulders, not disdaining still to wear the fashions worn by their great-aunts and grandmothers; flocks of children in the height of the mode, or in no mode at all, but few without one of the last new toys or lollipops; old folk quietly enjoying the sunset of life as well as the sunset of evening; workmen tidied up a little after their dusty labours are finished, smoking the sedative pipe of peace, and perhaps speculating whether any nymph entrusted with the care of children is likely to be a help-mate for them. If grantees enter or pass outside, it is only to look on

an instant, and wend their way. They have their Vanity Fair, which they call the 'Bois,' where they show off their airs, and flaunt their finery in rival equipages. But think what a paradise this garden must be for the dwellers in the still-existing remnant of the split and opened brick-and-mortar wilderness—and all the more paradisaical in their idea because densely thronged with pretty visitors.

This is the fairy scene of summer; flowers and foliage of richest hues, and human life in its sunniest, though not its wealthiest aspects. We have seen that one side of the garden-square is bounded by a temple dedicated to arts and trades, and in that temple, like pious Doctor Watts's 'little busy bee,' you may improve many a shining hour. But for hours when it does not shine, at least by sunlight, another side of the garden is adorned by the portals of another temple, erected in honour of the goddess Gaieté. This divinity, who deserves to be better known than she is amongst us, answers to the description, if not to the name, of another celestial (not Chinese) invoked by one of our greatest poets:—

'Come, thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore;
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides,
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty.'

The liberty you find established in this temple—dullards might call it a theatre, but I hold it to be a winter-garden of Fairyland—is represented by a freedom from grand-operative rules respecting the worshippers' dress, with full permission to pay attention or not to the ceremonies going on at the time, and even to sleep, if that were possible,

in such charming presences and on such narrow stalls. But besides the presiding goddess, Galeté, the temple always enshrines an idol, which is changed from time to time. The longer an idol can be made to last the better the ministers of the temple like it; but the moment it ceases to attract votaries they down with it at once, and up with another, or close the doors for a short interregnum. The idol in possession at the time of writing this, is THE WHITE CAT, under diverse phases and transformations. It changes quality, sex, condition; is a quadruped, a biped, a shepherdess, a prince, and is yet The White Cat to the very last. Such now is the idol of the Garden Square; whether it will be so at the time of your reading is beyond the range of human foresight.

Exactly as there are fagots and fagots, and feasts and feasts, so are there Fairylands and Fairylands. This Fairyland, although it has fashions of its own, invariably reflects and often exaggerates the fashions of the human world. Are high-heeled boots 'in,' fairies immediately adopt them, and even allow their respective rank to be indicated by the relative height of their heels. The good fairy, who will be eventually victorious, has higher heels than the bad fairy, who finally goes down to the bad; and the bad fairy's heels are visibly higher than those of her attendant little prettynesses and wickednesses. The same of high boots. Fairies outdo worldly ladies in the extent to which those boots mount up the calf, as well as in the brilliancy of their colouring—sky-blue, salmon, scarlet, emerald-green, flame. Like ladies in high life, they have no objection to be semi-nudities upon occasion, and are fond of covering things there is no particular need to hide, and of displaying what (but for fashion) modest women might think it decorous to conceal.

I have seen a fairy come out of a well (at the Athénée, a pretty little new temple of harmony, in a street behind the New Grand Opera, and calling itself the *fourth* lyrical theatre in Paris) with loose, untressed back-

hair in unnatural quantity, exactly as I had seen mortals of the feminine gender wear it at Boulogne-sur-Mer a few days previous. This fairy, too, had evidently copied the terrestrial custom of sporting the cast-off clothes of richer fairies, when she could not afford to buy new finery herself. Tyrolean hats, too, with their cock's-tail plumes, have found some favour with the fairies. The latter ornament especially has suggested a bright idea in every sense. The White Cat has some clean-limbed, full-grown attendants, just past the age for boarding-school, who, because they have stuck their heads full of gaudy feathers à la Tyrolean cock's-tail, dance in a bird-cage, and attitudinize on perches, fancy they represent a transitional state between ladies of the ballet and birds of Paradise, each with a long tale of her own.

There is plenty of *blague* or chaff in Fairyland, no want of double meanings, and even just a little coarseness, to act as rough-ground pepper and salt on appetites not over-nice. For instance, The White Cat's enemy has an army, whom you behold bivouacking, making their soup. During its composition a fairy starts from the ground with a jar, like those which contained the forty thieves, and which, to prevent possible mistake on the part of the most unsophisticated spectator, is labelled JALAP. The unseen but perfectly visible fairy then hocuses each caldron with doses of the aperient powder which we would not venture to give to a horse. The soup is partaken of and praised by all, from the burlesque general to the comic drummer. Then follow the throes and the woes, the feelings ill at ease, the contortions of countenance, the writhings of body, and the applications of hands to indicate pangs at other regions than the heart. Never was colic suffered with more real gusto. It was the little incident of 'donnez moi mon bâton,' in the 'Malade Imaginaire,' magnified and multiplied fiftyfold. There was rivalry amongst the patients who should have the worst pains and be threatened with the most unpleasant accidents, until one

by one they stole away, or bolted, leaving the pharmaceutical fairy mistress of the field. I confess the sight struck me with wonder, as being not disrelished by the most delicately-critical public in the world, the pioneer of every forward step in civilisation and refinement! Obvious it was, nevertheless, that many who did not 'ha, ha, ha' outright, laughed in their sleeve, or, like Richard III., behind their handkerchief. Nobody hissed or uttered the faintest sound of disapproval.

In Fairyland water cannot find its level. The seas there have waves as rigid as molehills, which are highest in the completest calms; but when rosin lightnings begin to flash, and sheet-iron thunders, helped by cannon-balls' roll, those obstinate waves swing to and fro, greatly lowering their average level. At such perilous moments we have beheld amongst them a white-robed damsel clinging to the mast of a boat about as long as herself is tall, pitching fearfully, and yet not upsetting, in defiance of all the laws of equilibrium. And air is as buoyant as water is unbending. Wingless young women flit through a radiant atmosphere and take their seats on rosy clouds, where, if Fairyland follows the rule of *our* side of the Temple, the places are the cheapest and the heat most overpowering.

Elhand, with all thy faults I love thee still. What are you to do of an evening in Paris, after an active day's business or a sharp spell of sight-seeing? Shut yourself up and read good books? Of course, if you like; but you can do that at home. Then the six o'clock dinner, often hearty and copious after the morning's fatigue, is an element which must not be left out of consideration. Does it sharpen your wits and brace your energies, or otherwise? Does the function of digestion demand and deserve no allowance of vital force to be expended upon it? In your programme, before you start, you sagely say to yourself, 'I will turn all my evenings to good account. I will attend the Théâtre Français and study the perfect performance of Racine's,

Corneille's, and Molière's masterpieces, as well as those of the dramatists of the day. I will hear all the difficult music that is being performed—Meyerbeer's unheard (by me) operas, Berlioz's and Schumann's harmonic moonings, and Wagner's unintelligibilities. Perhaps I shall discover their clue. I will avoid the light, the trifling, the profane. I will shut my eyes on all that does not profit, edify, instruct. I will be such a very, very good boy that, on getting back, I shall be obliged handsomely to reward my own good conduct.'

The spirit may be willing, but the flesh is flesh. To execute this praiseworthy educational scheme you will find yourself obliged to do as actors, singers, dancers, acrobats, and even fairies have to do, in order to carry out properly *their* intentions, namely, reserve their strength all day for the night's exertions, dine lightly and not late, but supping well after all is over. But after the day and the dinner we have supposed, what stretch of attention can you hope to exert? You are absolutely incapable of intellectual efforts, or if you succeed in making them, it will be at the expense of your health. Your mind wants something to amuse and lull it. It feels no inclination to unravel a complex intrigue, to criticise the consistency of a dramatic creation, or to listen to music which requires the hearer to be wide awake even when it is not of the class which has an irresistible tendency to load your eyelids with lead. What a relief to escape from the unmelodious music of the new pretentious school and the Aristotelian unities of the old classical dramatists, and to refresh the wearied limbs and spirit with a lively operette by Ricci or Offenbach, or with the bright ideal scenery, the poetry of motion, the splendours, and the nonsense, offered by Parisian Fairyland!

But The White Cat, you naturally ask, what of her? Well, I will tell you as much as I know, and as far as I can understand her. But since, in the piece, she does not appear till towards the close of the second

act—and there are but three, quite enough and to spare—you cannot expect her to be introduced at an earlier period in this paper. It is said that reasons may be given for anything. You may also find an excuse for almost everything, and any excuse will serve for what suits your taste and accords with your wishes. Now *The White Cat* is an excuse for brilliant scenery, gorgeous dresses, absurd travesties, burlesque dialogue, and as much showy dancing as can be admitted without making it a dance from beginning to end. That is my theory of *The White Cat*, and having formed it, I do not worry myself and take on if I cannot make head or tail of the plot. Plot, indeed! It would be a superfluity, if there were one. Who wants a plot on such occasions?

The White Cat is not a new production. It was first brought out at the Théâtre National (formerly the Cirque) on Thursday, the 12th of April, 1852, as a *Féerie*, or fairy piece, in three acts and twenty-two tableaux, and preceded by a prologue, the *Black Rock*. This revival gives it the same rank in the fairy drama as *Jack and the Beanstalk* with the rest of his family hold in fairy literature; that is, it is now both traditional and classical. Only *The White Cat* is undergoing the process experienced by the countryman's knife, one, indivisible, and ever the same—it has got a new blade, and may have a new handle. The scenes at the bottom of the sea amongst the shell-fish have been cut out and replaced by scenes amongst the birds. Other scenes are expunged in the performance without anything else being substituted for them, an enormous boon to the audience, who have quite enough for their money as it is. The piece now lasts from a quarter past seven till midnight, a few minutes after or before, according to the pace of the dancers' feet and the praters' tongues. Were all the dialogue spoken, all the couplets sung, all the transformations soberly and conscientiously executed, and all the intercalary dances performed, the thing might easily be made to last till five in the morning,

especially if, towards the small hours, the sitting was suspended long enough for a needful supper. Even superfluous scenery is cut down, to give more effect to that actually present.

But the curtain rises. Let us look with all our eyes.

A great black rock fills the left of the stage. On this rock stands a fantastic castle, whose walls descend quite down to the sea-shore. The fairy *Violente* is reclining on cushions covered with tiger-skins. *Blanchette* sits at her feet, and slave-girls dance before their mistress. After the dance, fairy *Violente* gives them her orders, and sends them about their business. *Blanchette* is absorbed in her reflections.

'What are you thinking about, *Blanchette*?' asks *Violente*.

'Nothing, godmother; I am only a-weary.'

'You must spin away, then, dear; work will drive away your weariness.'

'Spin, always spinning—not very amusing. And what's the use of it, as the thread serves no purpose?'

'*Blanchette*, you have lately fallen into the habit of asking questions.'

'Remember, godmother, I am no longer a child. Brought up by you in this castle, in which no man has ever set foot, with no other company than a parrot—'

'Cheer up, my dear; you are marriageable now; and if I have kept you in solitude it was to insure your innocence, and make you the worthy wife of the king for whom—'

'I shall be a queen! That's nice! And my future husband?'

'Is named King *Mignonnet*.'

'*Mignonnet*! What an ugly name! And he; is he young, tall, well-made, handsome?'

'I find him handsome enough to be your husband, and you ought to be satisfied with that.'

'Good! I guess. He is ugly.'

'He is like other men.'

'Are all other men ugly?'

'More or less. Moreover, King *Mignonnet* is coming, for you are seventeen years old to-day. You will see him. Take good care to

receive him well, Blanchette, otherwise you will repent of it. I found you abandoned on a road, in danger of being devoured by wolves, and if you are ungrateful for my favours——'

'Don't be angry, godmother. King Migonnet, no doubt, will suit me. He will take me away from this tiresome castle. And besides, I am very curious to see a man.'

'He will soon be here. I leave you now, my child, to fulfil a mission to the Queen of the Genil. Go and put on the rich ornaments I have sent to your chamber, so as to be well dressed when Migonnet arrives.'

'Instantly, dear godmamma. You see how obedient I am.'

Fairy Violente, after embracing Blanchette, ought to mount a winged dragon, who then flies away with her through the troubled air. She really makes her exit on Shanks's mare, by the ten-toe carriage. Even in the Temple of Gaïeté there must be a limit to the machinery. The sky is darkened, the winds howl, the thunder rolls, the waves are agitated. A vessel appears in the distance. A frightful tempest comes on. The vessel is driven on the rocks, and is soon seen to founder. Then you perceive a man battling with the waves. He swims towards the shore, but his strength abandons him. He sinks, and the waves cast him fainting and dying upon a rock. It is Prince Pimpondor.

'What horrible weather!' exclaims Blanchette, arriving in full dress. 'I have just seen a ship swallowed up by the sea. Ah! mon Dieu! what do I behold! One of the crew, and doubtless a man! I dare not approach him; but perhaps he wants help. How pale he is! (raising his head). He moves; he opens his eyes! I declare, a man is not ugly at all!'

'Where am I?' sighs the handsome stranger.

'At Black Rock Castle.'

'The castle of sorceresses!' he cries, rising and looking about him.

'Mais non, monsieur. 'Tis the castle where I live.'

'Pardon my error,' he pleads, regarding her with admiration. 'It

must be, then, the dwelling of the houris, the angels, or the fairies, for you certainly belong to one of those three categories. Who are you? O angelic being, what is your name?'

'I am called Blanchette. And you?'

'I am Prince Pimpondor. My father is King Matapa, who equipped this vessel to give me a pleasure-trip. The crew are all drowned; and so should I be, had not Providence thrown me on this hospitable shore.'

'Prince, be in no hurry to thank Providence, for you still are exposed to the greatest dangers. No man, before you, ever set foot on this promontory. It is protected, from the sea, by treacherous reefs, and from access by land by hideous monsters.'

'Who render escape from it equally difficult. No matter. Now that I have beheld you, adorable Blanchette, oh, now I renounce my peregrinations, and fix my residence in this peninsula.'

Then they sing a duo with the burden, '*Aimer c'est le bonheur*'—'*Love is happiness.*'

'Speak on, Prince Pimpondor,' continues Blanchette; 'all you say causes me a delicious emotion.'

'And you swear that never another——'

'Since you are the first man I have ever seen or spoken to——'

'In that case, I may be pretty nearly certain——. And what do you think of this specimen of the sex to which you don't belong?'

'I think you very pretty.'

'You are very good.'

And so the two innocents discourse, informing you that King Matapa, the Prince's father, has been conquered and despoiled of his treasures by the tyrant Migonnet, who is passionate, brutal, a wicked magician, and excessively ugly into the bargain. More songs; then is heard the cry of the dragon who is Fairy Violente's Pegasus, and the Prince hides in a rock. Grand entry of Migonnet to claim his bride. This is novel, and a success. He used to come in a fine sedan chair; his present vehicle is a three-man-velo-

cipede open carriage, splendidly got up, with gilt wheels, sumptuous liveries, little tigers behind, in short, an equipage fit for an emperor, which turns admirably sharp on and off the stage. The King pays his court; which draws from Blanchette the exclamation, 'What a monster!' 'I have made an impression upon her,' the monarch chuckles. 'How different to the other!' she remarks to herself. 'He my husband! Never!' 'Don't tremble, my chick,' says Migonnet; 'you are a nice little thing, and I authorize you to take familiarities with me.'

He begins, by trying to kiss her hand; which she refuses. Pimpondor comes to the rescue from his hiding-place, but the natural is no match for the supernatural. He is overpowered and carried off in an iron cage, to be imprisoned in Migonnet's dungeons. Fairy Violente punishes Blanchette's disobedience by turning her adrift, despoiled of her fine clothes, on a stormy sea, in an open boat without oars or rudder. The fairy waves her wand, and we see the maiden driven before the gale into outer darkness. Here, the billows ought to rise, roaring, to a prodigious height; the rocks on the shore ought to be covered with their foam. Once more the lightnings flash and the thunders peal. Two tempests in one tableau are a liberal allowance of hazy weather; but they are right to make the most of the sea before it is taken to pieces and carried backwards.

In the next tableau, a farm with a mill seen in the distance, we are introduced to other busy dramatic persons. Blanchette, after boat-wreck, I suppose, has found employment as farm servant with Daddy Chiendent and his wife, whose daughter, Pierrette, is blubbering loudly because her sweetheart, Petitpatapon, has neglected her of late. Like most spoiled children, she refuses to be comforted, driving her parents to despair; but when they find out that the lover has been drawn away by Blanchette's charms, they turn her out of doors to set matters right.

'Listen, hussey, and open your ears wide. We have had the goodness to confide to you all our goats and cattle to tend. We have had the weakness to let you do all the hardest work upon the farm. But the moment you begin to play us tricks by getting Pierrette's young man under your thumb, we withdraw our favours.'

'Oh, daddy Chiendent!' sighs Blanchette.

'That's what I mean. Go and fetch a cabbage-leaf, pack up your traps in it, and take yourself off.'

In the present cast, the rôle of Pierrette is filled by the famous Mademoiselle Theresa—her first appearance as an *actress*. In a ballad expressive of her despair at Petitpatapon's desertion, she shows herself capable of better things than to sing coarse songs at Cafés Chantants or elsewhere. All knew that she had humour, genuine, if broad; that she could touch the heart, was something new. In spite of a *belle laideur*, and a harsh unmanageable voice, with the intelligence and expression at her command, she may still remain and deserve to be a public favourite in the new line of business she has undertaken.

Blanchette, after her expulsion by the Chiendents, meets a poor old woman carrying a heavy fagot upon her back, whom she addresses in sympathizing words, and shares with her her morsel of bread. The consequence is inevitable to pantomime goes. The old woman, throwing off her disguise, appears as the Fairy of the Heath, who, to save Blanchette from present trouble, and open to her a new career, transforms her into an elegant cavalier, and gives her the title of Prince Fidèle. The Fairy of the Heath, the warm protectress of sincere attachments and faithful lovers, thus confers at one stroke a double benefit. She puts Blanchette in the way of rescuing Pimpondor from Migonnet's clutches, and she compels Petitpatapon to restore his affections to his first love Pierrette. He would follow the new one, and enters exclaiming, 'Mamzelle Blanchette! Mamzelle Blanchette! what's become of her? She has dis-

appeared! (To the Fairy.) I beg your pardon, madam. Excuse my intrusion. Oh, what a beautiful fine lady! And you, monsieur; pray excuse the question; but would you have the goodness to tell me where—Hem! What do I see! That countenance! Do my eyes deceive me? or is it Blanchette?

'Yes, my dear Petitpatapon, I am Blanchette, the goatherdess.'

'How, mamzelle! You are a man!'

'As you see.'

'I understand now why you refused to be my wife. Ah! what a simple fool I was! I was sighing for a young gentleman! Ah!'

The Fairy makes Petitpatapon Prince Fidèle's squire, after fitting him, in the twinkling of an eye, with a new suit of clothes and gifting him with fluent and flowery speech. To comfort Pierrette during his absence, she presents her with a scarf which will enable her, wherever he may be, to enjoy his company for the space of one hour under the same circumstances in which he happens to be placed. This insures multifarious changes of costume, greatly beloved of actresses. Through it, Pierrette successively appears as a cornelion, a duck, and in sundry other strange disguises.

Need I narrate how, after this start, Prince Fidèle, with his followers, Strongback, Fineear, Cleavethair, Drinkall, and Company, descend to the Land of Jewels, where, amidst floods of electric light, they discover a conspiracy against the Regent Diamond; how the Regent, in return, invites them to the fête of St. Emerald, given in honour of his favourite sultana (grand ballet, regardless of expense), and presents Fidèle with a sapphire talisman; how the Prince restores to poor King Matapa his treasures and his long-lost son (principal result, an-

other grand ballet still more regardless of expense; secondary consequence, the transformation, out of spite, by Fairy Violente, of Prince Fidèle into a white cat, who is thenceforth carried off to Cats' Castle in a golden cage).

I must not forget the Birdcage ballet, dissolving into an enchanted wood, where the trees spring up from below and grow down from the sky, and a colossal peacock spreads his tail beneath the rays of an aurora borealis, and another aurora borealis discloses countless sylphs grouped in front of the peacock, holding in their hands bouquets of diamonds which change to rubies, emeralds, and aquamarinas, and there are 'Sunset gleams that linger late,' with young ladies floating about in the air, and—I don't know what. This is not the description of a raving lunatic; neither was I tipsy when I beheld it. I saw it all plainly without putting on spectacles, though I cannot tell you the meaning of it. I would do so if I could, with the greatest pleasure.

Finally, Prince Pimpondor and Petitpatapon reach Cats' Castle, where they find Blanchette in feline garb, attended by Pierrette, ditto likewise. How those ladies are restored to human shape I should likewise be hard put to tell; but, for your consolation, they are.

Apotheosis, Bouquet, or 'tottle of the whole.'—Titania, the Queen of the Fairies, is stretched on a bed of flowers in an aerial palace. All the fairies are reclining or grouped around her. The Fairy of the Heath, standing in front of Titania, shows her Pimpondor and Blanchette as two models of love and constancy. Pimpondor, Blanchette, Petitpatapon, and Pierrette come forward and bow to the Queen of the Fairies.—Tableau.



POPPIES IN THE CORN;

OR, GLAD HOURS IN THE GRAVE YEARS.—No. X.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE,' &c.

UNSET BLOSSOM.

HOW much might be written concerning the waste in Nature. The seeming waste, I should rather say, for it is my purpose (in this handful of slight poppy-thoughts) to examine into and to disprove this fancied accusation against Nature of over-profusion and seeming waste. To do this only in one instance, however, or under one figure—that of the unfulfilled blossom-promise of the Spring. Much more, no doubt, than this, might be treated of; and therefore I said that very much writing might come under this head of accusations and exculpations of Nature. But I shall not take in hand now the myriad-seeded gourd, each flat seed with its germ of growth, of which the one or two only fulfil their possibilities, the rest are blighted. Nor the rain of smooth brown acorns in November, each slipping out of the rough cup, or pulling it to the ground, parting company by the shock; strewing the wet road with the tree's wealth; smartly pattering down now and then in a gust; falling one by one at lazy intervals in the still days; lying by threes and fives among those leaves which had not the heart to keep their place on the tree, and, daring the rough winter months, to hold the fortress, a sere ghostly garrison, until the Spring leaves come to relieve them. Lying scattered or clustered, among the leaves, and in the wet ruts, a prize for joyous children; a meal for gross swine; or, may-be, crushed on the silvered frost-bound road by the broad wheel of the passing waggon. At any rate, not waiting, in some wet mossy bed, cosy under a leafy counterpane, until the delicious call of life-bringing Spring bid the thin shell split, and the long straight root strike downward, and the slim shoot, with its opening twin leaves—real oak-leaves—sprout upwards;

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and year after year develop the infant growth, and so the germ of life fulfil its destiny; and every year a grove of oaks spring from the mother-tree. This also being only one forest-instance; for there are besides, the triangular beech-mast, smooth and ruddy-brown, lying thicker than the thin-gold leaves which have spread so rich a carpet for a wide circle about the grey smooth beech-bole;—and there are the large glossy chestnuts, so round and so flat, that come rustling and bobbing through the large dying leaves, carrying a yellow fan or two with them in their descent; a prize for old or young, as they lie there, so abundant and so seductive,

*When the shell

Divides threefold to show the fruit within.*

And the fallow-deer come lightly stepping that way with head aslant carrying their pride of antlers so gracefully; and this one and that stays a moment to crunch the ripe mouthful; but hardly one nut, if one, shall attain to that perfection of the grand heavy-leaved dome, all lit up, as it were, with the white spikes of blossom. Then there are also the pale hazel-nuts shaken out of their yellow-green case (but withered now at the top to a dry brown): seldom indeed left to line the hedge-bank or the copse; harvested by the children and gleaned by the dormice and squirrels. And the peaked Spanish-chestnuts gleaming out of their porcupine envelopes; and the rain of walnuts that, as the tree is thrashed, fall thickly down, breaking the smooth green bitter cover here and there, and showing the clean light shell within; one or two joyously found, a month after, among the dark heaped leaves, freed almost from the decayed black fibrous covering; none, hardly, passing from the slender sapling into

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the royal mass of pleasantly-scented foliage. But one might go on, from brown apple-pips to the stones which lie smooth in the halves of the apricot, or that are torn rugged out of the stained heart of peach and nectarine; or take note of the round cherry-stones that sprinkle the London pavement, at that season when the barrows of flushed bigarons or swart blackhearts tempt the passers by. Or the feathery cocoas of tropic lands might supply new instances, or the white pips bedded in the pulp of the lemon and the orange; or, leaving inanimate Nature, we might meditate with wonder upon the roe of the Herring or the Sole: a million of life-germs making a mouthful. For of all these, it is not that they are altogether wasted, seeing that they provide food, but that it might seem a wonder that of such myriads of marvellous possibilities, germs of such life and growth, only the one or two out of the myriads should fulfil what would seem to be its destiny.

'My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore.'

'That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete.'

Now it seems to me that we might push on this thought to the consideration of those germs which have attained so far that they contain all the fittings of life complete in them; nay, even life itself: the feather-crested palm curled up in embryo in the cocoa nut: the grove of oaks in the acorn: the silver cherry orchard in the kernel of the round dot that lies smashed on the flagstone. We might muse and philosophize on, in our ignorance and restlessness, obliged probably at last to acquiesce in the advice of a poetess of our day—

'Think how in soberness thy wisdom lies,
And have the grace to wait.'

We might, I say, breast these deeper waters, having, probably, the swim for our pains, and bringing up no pearl of knowledge from those abysses beyond our shallow divings;—but we will not make the

essay. Too deep for poppy-thoughts, too wide for a magazine article, we quit these speculations and keep to our one theme of unset blossom. Now this is not even good for food; and yet it, at least in its analogies, shall be proved not to have crowded the branches all in waste and quite in vain.

It is the Winter time, as I write. Winter: but the Spring-half now, not the Autumn-half, of the Winter-months. And though we can find in our hearts to love the Winter, when we have settled down to it, and the last leaves have gone, and the first icicles have come, yet it needs really but the first herald (it is golden acornite, or clear thrush-song) of the Spring, to cause our allegiance to be at once and easily transferred. We were content, perforce, while the iron gate was locked, and we were aware of no key; but directly we, fumbling in our bosom, find, one morning, the key of Hope, we are eager in anticipations of leaving our Winter duration for the freedom of the Spring. And so now, that a warm sun is shining, and one blue violet detected among its leaves, and one polyanthus tipping its orange cup with scarlet, I am reminded, and my heart leaps up at the reminding, that we have now entered upon January, and that at every relaxing of his gripe, some prisoner will be squeezing through the reluctant fingers of Giant Winter. True, January and February are stern generals, but when, having, they fondly imagine, subdued the country, they intermit for a day or two their vigilance, lo! (like Scotland whenever King Edward drew away for a little space), up start, in single spies and in battalions, the irrepressible rebels, continually reinforced, never losing ground that they have taken into possession; victorious at last, when March has brought their Bannockburn. And so, on a warm day in January, one thinks not so much of Winter's returning forces, as that we are not now retrograding from September towards dark December, but advancing, every week a step nearer, to April and to May. And as with the Pilgrims in the

Land of Beulah, messengers from the summer regions meet us at every step: here a band of white-robed snowdrops, here a crocus in shining raiment, or clad in the purple; here a daisy with the star on her forehead. Yes, the Winter is as good as gone, when we have got from units to tens in January.

And the weeks go by, faster, faster; and we have gone so far through the never-tiring program of the early year,—from the trembling hazel catkins to the red young leafage of the oak; and now we are expecting that ever new, ever delicious show of the blossom-time. True, the blackthorn has already sprinkled the hedges with its chilly white, and the plums on the wall have followed suit, yet 'tis but a dull-hued scanty robing compared to that which will shortly glorify the orchards. But the great pear blossoms are opening, and the apples are covered with the bunches of crimson buds, and the cherries are arrayed in dazzling silver,—and in a little while, passing through Herefordshire or Kent, the eye has a feast indeed. Looking down from some hill up which we have toiled, how wonderful it is, that sight of the acres of blossom! Wonderful, for it is probably each time some years since we saw that sight: we were busy in London, the last several blossoming-times, or in some far foreign land, or merely in a country with few orchards. At another time, instead of looking down on them, we are passing under them; and it much contents us to look up at the rosy or snowy wealth beautifying the jagged branches grey with lichen, against the blue; or to sit for a quiet meditative half-hour upon some sloping mossy trunk,

‘ And see
How fast the honey bees in settling shake
The apple blossoms on us from the tree.’

And this quotation brings us to what might well be the point of that sedate meditation. How fast, indeed, how profusely, the tinted snow or the silver snow steals down! Only imagine, we are tempted to exclaim, if all this promise were fulfilled, if the amount of fruit were justly repre-

sented by the amount of blossom! Wouldn't apples, and pears, and cherries be cheap! But now not one tithe of this promise is to be fulfilled. Fast, fast it snows down, the unset blossom; just beautiful for the time, but no whit useful; frail, fragile, exquisitely lovely for its week of bud, its day of bloom; but there an end. A vision of loveliness while it briefly lasted; but, after a few days, gone, and leaving no trace.

And better so; for even the fruit that is set will want thinning, to the end that the tree may concentrate its energies upon fewer undertakings, bringing them thus to a nobler maturity, rather than distribute its powers among too many schemes which it should not be able to finish. Leaving thus many to drop off, abortive and shrivelled; and making even those which lasted to be stunted and dwindled, rather than fair and full. Better, in truth, that much of the show should be merely unset blossom, loveliness that ends in loveliness, and passes not into use.

Only why then have this excess of barren blossom? Well, to me it seems answer enough to point to the glory and beauty of the spectacle, and to remind the questioner how sorry a sight would the spring orchards present if only clad with just the number of blossoms that were needed for the fruit. But truly it seems to my mind that there might be other reasons to be given for this apparently over-profusion, this (so to call it) waste in Nature. Though these blossoms come to nothing, may they not be useful in drawing up the sap which shall nourish and make fine fruit of that which is set? The tree that has not had lavish, overmuch blossom is not, methinks, that which bears much or fine fruit. Which thought brings us to our parallels and analogies.

First loves. What mere idle unset blossom are these! Lovely in the crimson bud, lovely in the flushed, dewy bloom; but stealing down soon to the summer grass in only the faintest summer air. So many even on the bunch of one life, but an impossibility that all can

come to maturity: frail blossom, evanescent; over-delicate for lasting existence. I cannot quite countenance such a crowded bunch as the following, but I must quote it, as being so much to the point.

'In the records of my breast
Red-lettered, eminently fair,
Stood sixteen, who, beyond the rest,
By turns till then had been my care;
At Berlin three, one at St. Cloud,
At Chatteris, near Cambridge, one,
At Ely four, in London two,
'Two at Bowness, in Paris none,
And last, and best, at Sarum three.'

So Vaughan, in 'The Angel in the House.'

But which of us that has ever had any capacity of heart, any generosity of disposition, any tendency to go out of self to seek (so to put it) self's complement in another, but has his one or two real, earnest boy-loves to look back upon and to contemplate with a tender, allowing heart, regarding them, even now, not as altogether unreal things? Boy-loves that came

'As ere the Spring attains her power,
The almond branch all turns to flower,
Though not a leaf is out.'

Loves that, if only beautiful, and not useful at all, are yet gently and kindly remembered. But I shall try to find out even some use in them presently.

How charmingly are these particular bunches of unset blossoms sketched and touched in by Charles Dickens in 'David Copperfield!' But, I repeat, nearly every one of us has some pages of these in the volume of his own life; and it is not ill (I think) to turn sometimes the leaves, that in later years have, perhaps, become more like those of account books, and to spend an idle half-hour in poring over those profitless illuminated writings, which are, indeed, much like real illuminations; the same flowers in different combinations; the same posies and rhymes, on differently-twisted scrolls—the same golden ground to all.

Which shall I select, from my own modest two or three, as my best way of setting others busy with their own kindred memories? Let it be the last and longest ideal love,

before the Real one came. Let the gleam of her golden hair, that I could just see, over the high partition, in the neighbouring pew, once more content my heart, and be watched without check or abashment. Let me go again long, lonely walks, in the hope of meeting her, and then, the great object attained, stammer, mutter, do something awkward, and then go writhing home. Let me carefully hoard for months my slender store of pocket money, in order that I may buy a forget-me-not ring, with which just carelessly to tie the bunch of large white snowdrops that were to address her on St. Valentine's day:—

'When first our timid heads we trembling
reared,
Too frail and weak stern winter to defy,
No pleasant sun our pallid blossoms cheered.
No hope was ours,—save that we soon might
die;
Yet oh, the kindness in thy deep blue eye,
The golden hair that crowns thy beauteous
brow,
Are like the summer sun and azure sky
That we have loved to dream of; and we bow
Our dying heads in peace, in radiant sunshine
now!'

Or violets another time—dark, Lent-coloured violets.

'Golden-haired girl, more fair than Spring,
Smile once upon us ere we fade!
Our little all, our life, we bring,
Too richly by that smile repaid;
—But if, our humble suit denied,
Thou turn'st away disdainfully,—
Sufficient is it to have died,
Seeking to pleasure thee!

'So love full oftentimes may live
No answer hoping to obtain,
Its life, its all of earth, would give,
And never ask a smile again;
With fond and unrepining breast
It lays its richest treasures down,
And counts itself not all unblest
But to escape a frown.'

Poor stuff, I grant you; but written from a true heart; really meant, I promise you, at the time. It is, I think, a beautiful trait in this unset blossom of which I am now speaking, that it has such an unselfish life: no sordid anticipation of the fruit to which it shall hereafter attain; simply a desire to appear lovely in some chosen eyes, content to be plucked by some dear hand, counting it enough to have given all and received nothing. And

here I seem to detect one of the uses of this blossom-love,—even to take the young heart out of self; to teach it the beginnings of that lesson of unselfishness, self-denial, self-surrender, self-sacrifice for the good of others, that is almost the grand lesson of life on earth. To go out of our self, give self quite up, merging it in, devoting it to, a higher, purer, nobler self (so to speak); and such, whether justly or no, do our ideal loves appear to us. 'The reflex of the thought within our heart,' the embodiment of that nobility, that purity, that loveliness, towards which the heart and mind, being, however fallen, partakers of the Divine Nature, naturally soar at first, until snares of earth and sin have limed their wings, or devils' shears have clipped their feathers. I see, then, even a part of God's teaching, a stage in His intended course, in the light thing (many would call it) of which I am treating. First comes the lesson of simple obedience to authority, to wills placed above our own. This learned, if we would learn it, then, next, the lesson of how to use our dawning freedom of choice and action, even in surrender of self for the good of another; the lesson of self-sacrifice; surely, a God-like attribute. For love is of God, and of God comes the GREAT EXAMPLE of self-sacrifice for the loved. Nor do I think that this is too grave a weight of meaning to put upon these unset blossoms of mine, that, if they have no promise of fruit, have yet their store of honey, which a careful, prying bee may extract, if he will take pains to get into the heart of them. Not for nothing were the profuse, seemingly—only seemingly—waste masses called up over the branches and the heart in the young, glad spring time. They have a meaning, a purpose, be sure, since He ordained them to whom nothing that He sends was intended to return void. They were sent on an errand, whether they rightly fulfil it or no.

First loves. Have not these, therefore, their work to do, even though they set into no tangible fruit for the after years? Though

they come to nothing, are they not useful, I ask again, in drawing up the sap which shall nourish and make fine fruit of that which is set? Have they not a work to do, a work of teaching, a work of preparation, in their brief, graceful life, which smiles out into the early Summer for its short while, and then fleets away and appears no more?

Not all in vain; no, not all in vain. They prepare the heart, as it were, for more enduring loves, even, as I showed, for the highest love of all; keeping it tender, unselfish;—unselfishness being the very life of that ideal blossom-love, and, to those who regard it more deeply than to scoff and mock at it, constituting its grace and beauty.

Nor when the set blossom comes, and the mere sentiment dying away, the enduring germ of that love appears, which is no longer an ideal and evanescent, but the real and enduring love, need the dear wife at all grudge that her lord should still treat tenderly and reverently the old pure and lovely visions of his immaturity. All the while they were but training his heart for that true and positive love into which they culminated, rather, to which they gave place, and which he laid at her feet; an offering far more worthy than could be presented by that cold heart that passed through the teens and never learned love's lesson. Unset blossom: but that made the tree lovely, and showed surely a better condition of life and vigour than if only one solitary bud had at last dawned on the cold and naked boughs, one laggard blossom at last opened. Better, surely, for her, the true Queen, to own the one set blossom out of the whole lovely wealth of the masses of the Spring—then they were the heralds that went before the Queen; or the bridesmaids, that did but escort the Bride, and then passed away into insignificance. O yes, I maintain that all these barren blooms did but prove the virtue and the vigour of the tree, and that she were foolish indeed who should look askance at that prelude part of the creation which was but preparing a well-adorned Garden for her own abode. Not faithless-

ness, not fickleness, but the exuberance of faith and constancy, thus crowded the branches with rosy bloom. And the one inherits all the stores of devotion, of unselfishness, of loyalty, of tenderness, which have been all the while storing up for her by the many.

Generally, love and poetry (unselfish blossom poetry) go together. And these early poetic essays will generally betray this attribute of unselfishness—the longing more for self-sacrifice than for attainment—of which I have spoken as being the very life of that ideal, blossom-love. And I could laugh a kindly laugh, as I read over (in some idle mood) the carefully-laboured offerings of the youthful muse, to see how little the commonplace notion of ever marrying seems to have entered into the ideas of that sublimed devotion, chiefly delighting (it would appear,) in picturing another in possession of the Treasure, and ourselves as the highminded guardian of that happiness in which we rejoice and acquiesce even the more, because it is our own proper bane. Nay, it is not so: bane is not the word at all; prove but that greater happiness is procurable for the beloved object from her choice of another, and we more than reconcile ourselves to the loss; we would leave nothing undone to further the accomplishment of her wish. Most delightful vision of all, that in which the Beloved steps over our Corpse to the attainment of her desire. But, generally, though we loyally acquiesce in her choice, and would not lift finger to alter it, yet we cannot but misdoubt its wisdom. It is not at all on our own account that we demur—no; but we are merely dispassionately anxious for her best welfare; hence we must, perforce, feel a certain sadness at her rejection of ourselves, her (if she but knew it) most faithful, most suitable companion for life. But she knows not our real self; never will; never can;—and garish tinsel sham excellence has dazzled her. 'Tis pity, but it cannot be helped. May she never find out her mistake, this is our sincere anxiety,—unless, indeed, she *should* do so, before it be too late

to rectify it. Merely out of our yearning for her greatest happiness, we wish—we may not *hope*—that this might be so. How admirably, by the way, has Coventry Patmore, in his sweet—seemingly simple but really deep—poem, set out this refinement of self-setting-aside (to coin a word,) of the lover that, not permitting a wish for himself to cross the choice of his lady, yet, for *her* sake, permits the regret that she has not chosen him! Who else can love her, would tend her, as himself? And ought not the *best* of all to fall to her lot?

'What measure fate to him shall mete
Is not the noble lover's care;
He's heartsick with a longing sweet
To make her happy as she's fair.
Oh, horror, should she him refuse,
And so her dearest good mistake!
His own success he thus pursues
With frantic zeal for *her* sole sake.
To lose her were his life to blight,
Being loss to hers; to make her his
—Except as helping her delight,—
He calls but incidental bliss;
And holding life as so much pelf
To buy her posies, learns this lore:
He does not rightly love himself
Who does not love another more.'

Yes, I cannot but champion these early throngings forth of the sweet blossoms, that, out of the very desire to obtain joy for self, pass on into even the abnegation of all joy of life for self, in order to the ministering all joy to another. I confess to sympathy with the culprit, in the following case, out from a newspaper a few weeks ago; and, had it been necessary (unromantic idea!) to apply a rod to the precocious youth, it should surely have been of sugar-cane, bound round with myrtle. But methinks the punishment exceeded the offence.

'An action was brought in the — County Court, on Wednesday, on behalf of a boy, aged thirteen, the son of a grocer, against the Rev. —, the Rector of —, for an assault, the damages being laid at 10s.

'It appeared that the boy had imagined himself in love with a little girl, named Constance —, who sat in an adjacent pew to that his father occupied in church, and had written the following letter to his small sweetheart:—

"From one who loves you.—Dear Consey—I write these few lines to you, hoping to find you quite well. I wish to see you, hoping I shall not be long to (*sic*) my wish is gratified (*sic*). If not, please to drop me a line or so, as I am anxious to know the answer. Excuse bad writing. With best love, believe me your affectionate lover and well-wisher,

"W. H."

'This very innocent effusion fell into the hands of a widow lady named Clarke, with whom "Consey" lives. She took it to the defendant, who at once went to the plaintiff's school, and took him away to the rectory, when he beat the boy severely with a cane. The rev. gentleman then took the plaintiff home to his father, and said that the lad had been guilty of an abominable insult towards the young lady.

'The defendant, on being called, said that he considered the letter an insult, not from anything abominable in it, but because it had been sent by a grocer's son to a young lady in a different position.

'The jury at once returned a verdict for the plaintiff for the full amount claimed.'

Does not the above simple story of premature romance and sentiment remind us of David Copperfield and Miss Shepherd, at the Miss Nettingall's Establishment? How he used to put her name into the prayer for the Royal Family and into the chanting of the choristers, and how he used, when alone in his room, to ejaculate 'Oh, Miss Shepherd!' in a transport of love; and to present to the beloved object. Brazil nuts and soft seedy biscuits and oranges innumerable. You see, even here lies a proof of that I said about the lesson of unselfishness to be learned from this blossom-love. Consider the devotion latent in the fact of a school-boy's wholesale sacrifice of pocket-money and 'grub' to the object of his affections! And I say, daring ridicule for saying so, that there was something good and wholesome and that might set upon the future character, in the nonsense (if you

please to call it so) of that fruitless, immature devotedness.

I am writing for those who have something of kindred experiences in their past years, whose hearts were like a laid fire—shavings at the bottom, wood over these, coal at the top. If the shavings, that caught so easily, burnt out quickly, then the wood lasted longer; and above this was the coal which, igniting last, burnt on longest. But the shavings and the fagots had their work to do, and if soon no trace of them was left, yet the effect wrought by them remained. Those whose hearts were thus built up, and thus easily caught fire, will understand me, and be interested in these slight pages; let the more strong-minded pass on to the next article.

But let me, with the kindlier hearts, revert to my own age of profuse unset-blossom. Let it be the winter, and let me be returning from my artist studies at the Royal Academy; an ermine carpet on the ground, and swansdown tippets adorning every lamp-post and window-sill. And let it be once again the delight of my walk that I may, by a slight detour, pass through the familiar no-thoroughfare street in which stands the London house which is at present the casket of my Jewel. Let me take delight once more to stand in the snow on the edge of the pavement, watching the lights in the rooms, and the shadows on the blinds. Let it be a melancholy fascination to me to hug to the heart the misery of being, as it were, an outcast, standing in the snowy street, away from the light and warmth; the misery of not being myself with her—of imagining others with her;—of fancying her smiling on them—nay, on one of them; of excruciating my heart by imagining the profanation of a kiss pressed on her 'lips' young red' by alien fervour; of tracing, or seeming to trace, her shadow on the blind; and at last going gloomily home, really (I imagine) enjoying the gloom; and setting down the whole matter in poetry—or what seemed such to me: drawing an ingenious parallel between our probable future histo-

ries from the incident of that solitary watch in the snow :

'How for thee the cheerful firelight
And for me the cold blank snow,
Ever seem the part allotted
Never canst thou know.'

Or let me come suddenly upon her one day in the Park, smiling and lovely, looking kindly even on me—(why the '*even*,' might puzzle wiser heads to explain)—and after the brief delight of the meeting, let her pass away, with her sister and her Governess, and be lost among the crowds that are coming, gay and blithe, from listening to the Band. Lost? Not so; for am I not, like one of Cooper's Indians, stealthily tracking them, stealing from tree to tree; unseen, unsuspected, and gloating over that fact; half cherishing a vague hope that a runaway horse, or a fall into the Serpentine, may give me that opportunity of rescuing her and just breathing my devotion as, (perfect compensation,) she wept over my 'dying form'?

Or let that evening come again, when there was dancing and merriment on the summer lawn, and after, in the lit room with its French windows opening on to the garden. And let the dark suspicion gloom suddenly on my heart that the fatal hour has come—that she not only is beloved—that of course—but loves again! So let me walk forth into the dark, and 'watch the dark forms fitting, across th' illumined room,' and make common cause somehow with a tall black lonely pine, with the bright evening star glistening in its lashes, and catch the weird-sounding dance-music murmuring or bursting in snatches into the still-deserted garden; and again, set this all to poetry :

'The merry music peeling
Fell sadly on mine ear,
For o'er my hopes came stealing
Thoughts desolate and drear,
Like warning winds that stir the leaves
Before they disappear.'

And let me go over it all, as I said just now, hugging that misery to my heart, enjoying it, if the truth were told; planning the being in church secretly at the wedding

(when you really love, you would probably prefer to go miles away); with still the great acmé of all, to die for her—to die even for Him. In real love, again, you would prefer to be quietly united to her yourself.

How well is this unset-blossom-love, that is quite a distinct thing from the actual love that sets, and attains maturity, drawn for us in Romeo and Juliet! In the ideal devotion he is well content to wander about away from his kind, evidently relishing and revelling in his despair and dejection, making no effort, it would seem, to lay siege in right earnest to the fair lady's heart. But on seeing Juliet, and conceiving in very deed the reality of love, lo! the sentimental lover becomes a practical man, with common sense and energy, going in, as it were, to win; assailing the Maiden's self, instead of wandering about in dark groves talking to her glove.

Still, I maintain there is a very tender grace and beauty about all this unreal (nonsensical, the hard heads call it) love, this barren blossom of the heart in its spring-time. True, when we come to the precincts of forty, we are not likely (for instance) to dabble much in the pages of that small red-gilt-backed pocket volume (which yet might probably be rummaged out somewhere from our shelves), the '*Language of Flowers*.' We can't go back to our own early days of sentiment, nor is it desirable that we should. Still, we need not proclaim the pleasing discovery, even suppose we have made it for ourselves, to others just flushing into the blossom-days—that all that sort of thing is humbug. There may be, and is, often, no doubt, much that is weak and washy in boy and girl-love; and this should be checked, and manliness and reality infused even into that which (we may secretly know) is nothing but soon-scattered, unset blossoms. Yet, if but for '*Auld lang syne*,' for the sake of our own old memories, our own far-away experiences—even if our own apples be matured, stowed away, withering a little now,—we should surely be patient.

with trees that are just rising into that full overcrowded brief loveliness, and we should be reverent and tender towards the beauty of that excessive promise, even though we well know that so much must flutter down, fruitless, unfulfilled. To recur to that very red pocket volume—is there nothing of kindly reminiscence left for it, no dried blossom, as it were, shut up in it? nothing that brings a smile, pensive rather than contemptuous, to the lips, a softness to the usual abstraction of the eyes? What! have we not, treasured still, pressed in some choice book of poetry, even the very flower she gave us, in that more gentle mood; and were we not in terrible earnest when we threw that spray of ‘chest-nut-tree’ with its despairing message over the terrace-wall? and was there not an old prettiness about those times, that the ledger-days seem (if you pause to think)—seem a little to want?

For there is a sadness about the fall of the blossom, even though it was not all unset, even though we have stored the fruit to which it came. The poetry of life goes, in great measure, (excepting for swallow-flights of return,) when life’s Spring and early Summer have fled; and a dull prosaic routine seems to have settled upon most lives after they have left us. Then Autumn—the fruit sometimes remembers the old blossom-beauty, and burns into colour—not those delicate fairy-tints—colour richer, more decided, maturer.

—O world which will somehow unite the grace and the glory of both promise and fulfilment!

But, meanwhile, in *this* world we are at school, and are to disregard no stage of our teaching, no teacher in any stage. And if it be true that this unset-blossom of boy-love has for its mission the teaching us self-sacrifice, surrender of self-interests, self-denial for another, it surely has its use, as well as (I think) its beauty; and I am abundantly excused for lingering on reminiscences of a thing so short-lived and frail.

And many more instances might be brought forward of this over pro-

fusion (?) of blossom upon the orchards in the spring-tide. There, for another example, are our grand, unrealized, often unrealizable schemes. Crowding the branches, flushed bunches of full bloom, innumerable buds yet pushing their way upon the bough; dreams, visions, never to be fulfilled, incapable of fulfilment, yet beautiful, and surely not without a use. No, for they keep the sap flowing, ready; they prevent stagnation; they nurture the generous flow of the abundant life; the fruit that sets shall be the better, perhaps, for the full wealth of blossom that seemed to come to nought; one week transfiguring the orchard; the next, crumbling into the common clay. And the tree (let me say again here) that has not had lavish, overmuch blossom, is not (at least in human husbandry) that which bears much or fine fruit.

And so be content, and be not over harsh, O grave, matter-of-fact man, coming out of your granaries and stored fruits into the lovely spring landscape. See, you are dry and grizzled now, and age, as with hoary lichen, is making your head grey; but once for you also the spring airs were blowing, once for you also came that strange stirring of the sap, that innumerable bursting into bud, into blossom; that idea and thought (graceful in its unselfishness, however unpractical and barren), of living only in the springtime, only for beauty and love, and not for sordid fruit. Once for you also was that undoubting anticipation of feeling ever the first rush and energy of being, that could not but crowd the boughs with a thousand graceful thoughts, loves, schemes, hopes, too frail, indeed, even to last through the summer-airs, far more the rough wind and weather that lurked in the later year. And remembering all this, I know you will relax your severe brow, and let the spring orchards bloom their brief hour unreprieved. I half think that even on your own gnarled branches, I may,—as I speak, and you fall into a reverie,—see smiling timidly out, if but one late bunch of half-abashed, sur-

prised rose-streaked, crumpled blossom :—

'Oh I see the blossom-promise of my spirit hath
not set;
Ancient founts of inspiration well through all
my fancy yet.'

Nor, to end, shall my Real-love

quarrel with these kindly reminiscences of the graceful old Blossom loves. They had even all fallen away, for a six months' space before, Queenlike, she entered the heart which they had but strewed for her entrance.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

A WOMAN OF LETTERS.*

WE notice with sincere pleasure several recent works giving us biographies of women of letters. We always give a welcome of pleasure and applause to such literature. For the most part, indeed, the life of a literary lady does not present any strong points of interest. It must be owned, too, that whilst literature adds much to the attraction of a woman's life, it not unfrequently happens that a woman devoted to literature often sacrifices many of life's lighter graces. Still, the fullest revelation of a woman's pure, high-toned nature, where exquisite faculties are harmonized and perfected by culture, is perhaps most frequently to be looked for in some such biography as that of Miss Mitford's. There is, as a rule, in such a biography as Miss Mitford's or Miss Austen's, a substratum of calm, accurate, truthful delineation of surrounding scenery and events, albeit brightened or dashed with touches of *espiglerie* or pathos, which, in these days of unquiet thought, is eminently instructive and consolatory. Men are now often tempted to disbelieve in God and woman, and the transcript of a bright, intelligent, pure, self-denying life, gives us better thoughts and hopes, and cannot fail of being among the healing and beneficent influences of our day. In the case of Miss Mitford, 'Our Village' has been remanded to the obscurity of the upper or lowest shelf, and we are afraid that even the literary fragments incorporated in the work will not possess much value. But the life here disclosed will always have

an ethical beauty of surpassing excellence.

The Mitford autobiography, for such it really is, consists of a series of letters; the first is from a clever schoolgirl, just entering the establishment of a clever *émigré* in Hans Place; the last is written by a thin, aged woman, within the imminent shadow of the death that came only two days later, asking a friend 'to spend one more cheerful evening' with her. The 'One of Mary Russell Mitford's Executors' who has written the Introductory Chapter, is none other than that glorious old clergyman, William Harness, so recently taken from us, a name which, though almost unknown to the outside world, looms largely in the inner literary history of the present century; not only one of the earliest of Miss Mitford's friends, but the friend of so many great men of his epoch, including Byron, who wished to dedicate 'Childe Harold' to him. The simple particulars of Miss Mitford's life may be soon gathered up. It was a life sanctified by patience and suffering; one long endeavour, only partially rewarded by success, to provide for the support of her parents. It is sad to say that the one shadow, failure and disappointment of her life, arose from her father. Yet we confess that we feel a sort of kindness for Dr. Mitford. The critics who, with relentless virtue, have mercilessly commented on his thoughtlessness and extravagance, have hardly done justice to those qualities which riveted the affections of his wife and daughter. He consumed fortune after fortune in gambling and speculation. The

* 'Life and Letters of Mary Russell Mitford.' London: Bentley.

story of his winning the 20,000*l.* lottery prize, through his gifted little daughter fixing his mind upon a particular number, is one of the most curious bits of family luck ever recorded. The money, lightly won and lightly lost, was at least never selfishly and profligately spent. Only now and then is there the slightest word of reproach from his admirable daughter. He was a thorough gentleman every inch. His fond child declared that he was the pleasantest gentleman that she ever met, and she would not exchange him for any father that ever lived.

The readers of 'Our Village,' a work which for its clearness and beauty is one of those English classics which will always keep its readers, will now possess a renewed interest in it. For Miss Mitford's hand was working harmoniously with her eye, and her pencil was dipped in her heart. She was herself but a villager in 'Our Village;' banished from a stately home to a small tenement that had been a village shop, she who had been familiar with duchesses in their castles, and possessed a wealth of heart and mind that would leave most of us poor indeed. But she did not repine at 'the Cabin.' 'It is within reach of my dear old walks; the banks where I find my violets; the meadows full of cowslips; and the woods where the wood-sorrel blows.' Those were days in which people wrote letters, and it seems pretty obvious that Miss Mitford had some idea that these letters should some day be published. Some of them are dashed off at the moment, 'playful rather than humorous, graceful rather than precise,' and we like them best of all. They are all full of genuine criticism, faithful description, and sparkling anecdote. Mr. L'Estrange, who has generally discharged his work to admiration, might, as in the case of the late Judge Talford, have disallowed some of the letters, although there is hardly a unity in the work that would make its perusal fatiguing. According to our wont, we make a florilegium.

An Auction at the Duke of Marlborough's.—'I was never before so thoroughly aware of the capricious

manner in which things go at an auction where there is no reserve—no power of buying in. For instance, some blue cloth curtains, which a London upholsterer offered to put up new at fifty guineas, fetched a hundred and thirty! A table of the most beautiful pollard oak, inlaid with brass and exquisite woods, which cost two hundred and fifty guineas, fetched twenty-three. A sideboard of equal splendour went equally cheap, and some trumpery chandeliers equally dear. You may imagine what wood the man of the hammer is made of, when I tell you that, in selling a very fine head of Christ by Guido, an undoubted and ascertained original, he never said one word of the picture or the master, but talked grandly and eloquently of the frame.'

Her Majesty the Queen (1837).—'A dear friend of mine, who is appointed superintendent of the Queen's dressers, gives a very interesting account of her. She says she is a girl of great power, sedate and serious far beyond her years, and fully equal to all that she will be required to do. King Leopold told the housekeeper at Windsor that he never went to Claremont without a recurrence of the same feelings as when he first returned there after his irreparable loss.'

A Royal Subscription.—'Among the subscribers are the Queen, who desires her name *not* to be mentioned, as she gives from her private income, and fears being subjected to solicitations (this adds to the compliment, as it proves it is not a matter of form).'

A Royal Visit to Strathfieldsaye.—'The Queen looked pale and ill, simply dressed, smiling and well behaved; the horses going at a foot-pace, and the glasses down. The Duke went to no great expense. One slip of carpet he bought; the rest of the additional furniture he hired in Reading for the week! The ringers, after being hard at work for four hours, sent a can to the house to ask for some strong beer, and the can was sent back empty. The Duke is a just master—as Johnstone, his gardener, said to me once when I idly asked if he were a *kind*

one—and not a very bad landlord; but he has no open-heartedness. The Duke looked relieved beyond all expression when he had made his last bow to his royal visitors; his whole countenance said plainly, "Thank God it's over!" and no doubt he felt so. Sir Robert Peel passed us going to town by railway. They said, "There goes Sir Bobby," and they hissed him."

Lamartine.—"When he was in London, a few years ago, Mr. Rogers asked him with strong interest to give him some details about Beranger, "the greatest French poet." "Ah! Beranger!" said M. de Lamartine, "he made advances to me, and, of course, wished for my acquaintance; but he is a sort of man with whom I do not choose to have any connection!" Think of that! Mr. Rogers told the story himself, with the greatest indignation, to the Ruskins, and they told it to me."

The Tennysons.—"Alfred Tennyson says that people now-a-days are not merely indifferent to poetry, that they absolutely hate it." [He probably revised his opinion long before forty thousand copies of the 'Holy Grail' were issued.] "I heard this from a sweet young woman who is staying close by at Mrs. Anderson's, and has taken to me, as young people sometimes do. She is intimate, very, with all the Tennysons, and speaks of them more highly than I ever heard any one: perhaps she knows them better. She says they are the most unworldly people she ever knew, valuing everybody by their personal qualities, apart from all considerations of rank, or wealth, or fame, or consideration. Indolence is the besetting sin of the race; but they can work if they will. For instance, she made Alfred dig up the whole garden at her father's country living near Seven-oaks, and he did it capitally."

Mr. Charles Kingsley.—"Mr. Kingsley took me quite by surprise in his extraordinary fascination. . . . Mr. Kingsley is not only a high-bred gentleman, but has the most charming admixture of softness and gentleness, with spirit, manliness, and frankness—a frankness quite transparent, and a cordiality and

courtesy that would win any heart. He did win his own sweet wife entirely by this charm of character. She was a girl of family, fortune, fashion, and beauty; he a young curate, without distinction of any sort, without even literary distinction, for he had not then published."

Mrs. Trollope.—"My old friend Mrs. Trollope, in spite of her terrible coarseness, has certainly done two or three marvellously clever things. She was brought up within three miles of this house, being the daughter of a former vicar of Heckfield. I have known her these fifty years; she must be turned of seventy, and is wonderful for energy of mind and body. Her story is very curious; put me in mind to tell it you. She used to be such a Radical that her house in London was a perfect emporium of escaped state criminals. I remember asking her at one of her parties how many of her guests would have been shot or guillotined if they had remained in their own country."

R. B. Haydon.—"I was always certain that his suicide proceeded from a desire to provide for his family, and, thanks to Sir Robert Peel's benevolence, it succeeded."

Mr. Walter, of the "Times."—"I saw Mr. Moore, many years afterwards, at Mr. Walter's, of the "Times." Such a contrast! I am speaking of old Mr. Walter, the shyest and awkwardest of men, who could not bear to hear the slightest allusion to the journal from which he derived both his fortune and his fame. The poet had arrived with Mr. Barnes, the editor, and put his host and his introducer into an agony by talking all through the dinner as frankly of the "Times" as he used to do at Mr. Perry's of the "Chronicle." It was a most amusing scene; and I think when I enlightened him upon the subject he was very glad of the mistake he had made. "They deserve it," said he to me, "for being ashamed of what, rightly conducted, would be an honour."

Dr. Newman.—"Frank was sent to Oxford, taking, amongst other recommendations, letters from me. One of my letters was to an old

friend of Mr. Newman's, to whom he showed it, and when next I saw Frank he told me—somewhat to my alarm (for it was in the very height of the controversy)—that he owed to me the kind notice of that great scholar. "I breakfast with him once a week," quoth Frank, "and he gives me the best advice possible." "What about?" I inquired. "Everything," returned Frank; "the classics, history, mathematics, general literature. He thinks me in danger of overworking myself in Greek—he, such a scholar! and tells me to diversify my reading, to take exercise, and to get as much practical knowledge and cheerful society as I can. He questioned me about Shakespeare's poetry, and the prose writers after Lord Bacon. In short, he talks to me of every sort of subject except what is called Tractarianism, and that he has never mentioned."

Novissima verba.—"I have always believed with a calm conviction in that divine history and that divine mission, but I used to worry myself about the manner of it. Now I am reading the Gospels for the third time within two or three months, and accepting the whole of the holy mystery as I find it. Mystery there must be, and it is wiser to take humbly the relation of eye-witnesses than to seek to reconcile what we cannot comprehend by our own feeble intelligence. I throw myself humbly, hopefully, fearfully, on the mercy of God."

There is no part of the work that has a deeper interest than the frequent reference in the third volume to the great poetess whom England and Italy have lately lost, Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Here is the earliest mention of the young poetess:—"A sweet young woman whom we called for in Gloucester Place went with us, a Miss Barrett, who reads Greek as I do French, and has published some translations from *Æschylus*, and some most striking poems. She is a delightful young creature, shy, and timid, and modest. She is so sweet and gentle, and so pretty, that one looks at her as if she were some bright flower.' We soon find her

writing to her 'sweet love' on terms of the most enduring affection, and frankly recognising in the young girl a spirit brighter and deeper than her own. Dr. Mitford, with a mind finely attuned to intellectual excellence, albeit no bookish man, felt the charm of this new-found friend. 'My father and myself sat pensively over the wood fire until he said suddenly, "You are thinking of dear Miss Barrett; so was I, God bless her!" Every night at that time I had thought of you, my sweetest, sitting over the glowing embers, and at last I determined to write to you before I slept. . . . I sit and think of you and of the poems that you will write, and of that strange, brief rainbow crown called Fame, until the vision is before me as vividly as ever a mother's heart hailed the eloquence of a patriot son.' The old dying father always used to say, 'Miss Barrett! dear Miss Barrett! Heaven bless her!' We are here told that the fine poem, 'Lady Geraldine's Courtship,' always a favourite, forty-two pages, was written in a day. By-and-by the poetess is married, and by marriage is 'not merely improved but transformed.' She makes Miss Mitford long that she was losing herself in the chestnut forests or gathering grapes at the vintage. We have preserved in these volumes a very interesting letter written by Mrs. Browning:—"I wonder if the Empress pleases you as well as the Emperor. I approve altogether, and none the less that he has offended Austria in the mode of announcement. Every cut of the whip on the face of Austria is an especial compliment to me, or so I feel it. The Empress, I heard the other day from high authority, is charming and good at heart. She was educated at a respectable school at Bristol, and is very English, which does not prevent her shooting with pistols, leaping gates, driving four-in-hand and upsetting the carriage when frolic requires it—as brave as a lion and as true as a dog. Her complexion is like marble, white and pale and pure; her hair light, rather sandy; they say she powders it with gold-dust for

effect. But her beauty is less physical and more intellectual than is generally supposed. She is a woman of very decided opinions.'

Everywhere we have a delineation in these letters of Miss Mitford's good sense and good taste; but we do not see deep into her heart or much of her inner history. Her intense affection to her parents is manifest enough, but even in this affection there is an undertone of sadness—the feeling that great sacrifices had been made which easily and justly might have been avoided—the feeling that in that great battle with grim poverty she had rather come off the worse. We find very little expression of the feelings either of hope or of regret, certainly not because she was free from such feelings, but perhaps because they were too deep and sacred for any mere literary handling. When she touches on love she does so with a light, careless touch, as if she were altogether untroubled with that sporadic disorder of the human mind. On one occasion it is on record that she received an offer of marriage from a total stranger, who was so charmed with a perusal of her writings that he wished to make her his wife. We know ourselves the case of a gentleman who was so charmed with the perusal of a theological tale that he wrote to offer the author a living. Unfortunately the author was a lady. Miss Mitford sent her adorer a simple refusal, and refrained from the raillery which a lady of her lively talents might have shown. We are sure that the unknown gentleman, whose unprejudiced, passionless affection is deserving of commemoration, missed a good wife; but then if he had been more fortunate the world might have lost a classic work and these interesting memorials of a noble-minded woman's career.

PLATONIC ATTACHMENTS.

It will probably suit the sentimental month of the year if we say something on the subject of those friendships of sentiment for which the great Plato has somewhat unwarrantably been made responsible. The case is recorded of a man who

was asked by a British father the nature of his intentions in relation to his daughter. The gentleman replied that they were 'honourable, but not matrimonial.' The British father, as my version of the story has it, ejected him from his doors and forbade him ever more to enter the house. I am far from saying that this gentleman had not a justification according to the higher and transcendental philosophy. But such a system is only fitted for philosophers, and not for ordinary humanity. Common sense and experience must legislate for us in all ordinary matters; but they notoriously fail in matters that require a wider grasp and a more delicate insight. It would be a practical state of society, with a vengeance, in which A. B. and C. D., being man and woman, could not have the attachment of sincere friendship without being vulgarly in love with each other. Let us look into the question a little, as not unbefitting the festival of the worthy saint of the fourteenth instant.

When Byron wrote the lines, beginning—

'O Plato, Plato, you have paved the way

With those confounded phantasies of thine'

he was simply showing a great ignorance of the Platonic Dialogues. In the 'Phædrus' and elsewhere Plato gives us his notion of matters, and if any one thinks that Plato's dialogues are enlightened with much love-talk, he can have done but little in that wilderness of dialectics. Mr. G. H. Lewes says that the common notion of a Platonic attachment is the affection which a man has to a girl whom he cannot or will not marry. What Plato says is, that the soul goes forth in its search for Beauty—which seems sentimental enough—but then Plato identifies Beauty with Truth, which is not so sentimental. Plato does not introduce any considerations of sex into his theory. Platonic attachment would probably exist in its best in the attachment of a pupil toward the pupil's teacher. This is certainly not the English interpretation of the phrase. But though the English sense does not correspond with the Greek sense, it does not therefore

follow that the English sense is unworthy of discussion, which refers to an attachment between two individuals of different sexes. Of course the good old British plan of a wedding is infinitely superior to any subtle philosophy; but this may not be possible, or may not meet the circumstances of a supposed case.

In many minds there is a very low and inadequate idea of the nature of friendship; an incapacity for any ideas save those that are obvious and coarse. Friendships of the chivalrous, Hebrew, classical type seem greatly on the decline. The friend that sticketh closer than a brother; the friend who is as one's own soul; friendship as between David and Jonathan, as between Nisus and Euryalus, seem becoming rare in the land. Yet most men have some friends at least with whom they stand on terms of most enduring and open intimacy. There is more thoroughness and freedom with the old school or college friend than you can get anywhere else. You understand and you are understood; you talk or you are silent; you are pitched into, fought for, excused, tolerated, forgiven, beloved. You have a sense of peace and constancy. Of course, when you have feelings of friendship towards the other sex, a lot of other considerations may possibly crop up. In your friendship with your own old chum there is no admixture of these considerations. There is no admixture of secondary considerations, no express ties of relationship, no introduction of mere feeling or sentiment. But is friendship so poor a thing that the introduction of these elements proves necessarily fatal to it? A whole set of queries may be propounded by the modern Platonist. Is it only permitted to you that you should have one, and only one such friend, and that one the husband or the wife? May you not have two or three such friends, without a shadow of disloyalty to any? Is it not a poor thin nature that believes that all excellence is summed up in one person, and refuses to seek for and recognize it elsewhere? Is not the friendship of heaven, where there is neither marrying nor giving in mar-

riage, very much of this kind? Is not 'exquisite companionship' that great charm of existence which a wise man will seek to cultivate? Would it not be better if, instead of the wild unrest of amusement and the ordinary conventionalities of social intercourse, we cultivated the mutual education of heart and mind? Instead of isolation, would it not be better if we cultivated broader and more generous sympathies? Would not such a freer intercourse between the sexes be an approximation to that charming intercourse which Gibbon describes in Switzerland, a realization also of the best life of the purest, earliest Christian ages? Is it not modern Platonic attachment, despite Mr. Lewes's sneer, that will promote chivalry, courtesy, forbearance, tolerance in life?

Let us then look on friendships as they may exist between the sexes. The highest and purest is that between a mother and a son. To what rare height may not this friendship proceed beyond the height of maternal instinct and filial duty! Some such cases we have seen of the deepest beauty. When there has been a true sympathy of mind and heart—when the religious thoughts and aspirations are the same—when there is an equality of intellectual stature—when the same tastes and sympathies exist—we have seen most endearing friendship, as well as deep affection between mother and son. That man is truly to be pitied who has not found this in his mother, or in some wise, good, thoughtful woman, older and better than himself. Another form of such friendship, all pure, deep, passionless, is that between brother and sister, as—to take a memorable instance—between Charles Lamb and his sister. And now, retaining the qualities, but banishing the relationship or difference of age, may it not be possible that such friendship and attachment may exist between the sexes without a single thought of sex? and is not this a fair, legitimate modern version of the Platonic theory?

We have stated the theory, and we add that, in high-toned earnest

natures, where the moral and intellectual faculties predominate, such Platonism has always worked satisfactorily, and will so continue, doubtless, to the end of the chapter. Only we add a caution. It takes two both to make a quarrel, and also to realize Platonic attachment. It is an awkward business when one person means Platonism, and the other means love. If a man uses 'friendship's holy name' successfully, and then wants more than friendship, when he finds that no more was ever meant, he uses violent language, and complains that he has been badly treated. When Lancelot would give Elaine nothing more than Platonism, the lily maid of Astolat pined and died. We lay down no principle. The Peripatetic only deals tentatively with theories, and does not attempt any legislation for particular cases. But he feels inclined to quote some old-fashioned adages about handling fire and playing with edged tools.

THE HOLY GRAIL.*

We must frankly confess to some considerable feeling of disappointment at Mr. Tennyson's new volume. It is not only that the volume is slight, and that when we have eliminated from it various reprinted pieces with which every lover of Tennyson is familiar, that it becomes very slight indeed. Neither is it that in any respect the volume sinks below, we will not say the level, but the high table-land of Mr. Tennyson's uniform poetic excellence. But we begin to see that Mr. Tennyson sincerely desires to leave a great poetic work behind him, and we can scarcely think that he has succeeded in his wish. In a significant note we are now told of the arrangement according to which Mr. Tennyson wishes his Arthurian poems to be read; and in the new *bijou* ten volume edition we have these poems actually so arranged, so that we can survey the full effect of the poet's plan, and we cannot say that we are satisfied with it.

They are a noble set of poems; and who is there among us who does not acknowledge a deep intellectual debt to their author?—a debt which the reading public has so frankly acknowledged, that Mr. Tennyson is far away the most prosperous poet that England has ever known. But there is not that symmetry and unity that would weld those widely-sundered poems into the epic unity of a complete whole. The crowning poem of the series is now the familiar 'Morte d'Arthur,' published a quarter of a century ago, remodelled into the 'Passing of Arthur,' deprived of the accessory talk about the wassail bowl, 'geology and schism,' Homeric echoes, the Parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall (which, nevertheless, will always leave an incongruous association), and lengthened by an introduction and supplement suggestive of ingenious dovetailing. The beautiful poem of 'Sir Galahad' might almost have appeared somewhere as an intercalary lyric. All through these poems the 'Quest of the Holy Grail' is the great event in the background; the supernal, mystic, religious element, which gave a dim, rich colouring to the poems. The Vision of the Sacred Chalice of the Last Supper, vouchsafed only to the pure of heart, who would dare every earthly peril to obtain it, is one of the most striking, innocent fancies which, even in the latter Roman days, could have seized a half-darkened, half-illuminated mind. Mr. Tennyson, has, therefore, acted artistically enough in making the 'Holy Grail' the central poem of his new volume; it is the very poem which we could have wished written. It is a very noble poem, probably the best of 'The Round Table,' unless, indeed, we except 'Guinevere.' But Mr. Tennyson is now forced to deal in a more precise and definite way with the supernatural and religious element, and so provokes an analysis which is somewhat disillusionating and disappointing. The poems retain their character of being written on different occasions, at different ages, with different intentions, and the new collocation only gives them

* 'The Holy Grail and other Poems,'
By Alfred Tennyson, D.C.L. Poet Laureate. Strahan and Co.

an apparent instead of an essential unity.

The whole cycle of legend has now a more narrative character about it, and less of those hints and suggestions which once gave an imaginary twilight character to some of the poems. We need hardly say that Mr. Tennyson's matchless felicity of phrase and rhythm remains the same, and that earnest, ethical, semi-religious tone which all his readers have learned to love. Looking at the poems as they are now, we are obliged to ask, What are the remoter meanings which Mr. Tennyson attaches to the higher conceptions of his Arthur? Who was Arthur? Was he son of Gorlois or Uther, or was he other born than the sons of men, brought over the sea in the dragon ship, 'from stem to stern bright with a shining people on the deck,' a kind of Avatar or incarnation. The two wizards

' Dropt to the cove and watch'd the great sea fall
Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the deep
And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged
Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame:
And down the wave and in the flame was borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet,
Who stoopt and caught the babe and cried,
"The King!"'

Now compare with this the poem of the 'Passing of Arthur.' There had been a great battle, towards the setting sun, in Lyonesse, that submerged territory between the Land's End and the Scilly Isles. We have known those who looking down into those depths, even in these days, have persuaded themselves that they have seen dim walls and ruined churches; and in visiting the Scilly Isles we, like others, have been deeply impressed with the reality of 'lost Lyonesse.' In the great battle all fell, false Modred by the king's hand, who was left alone with Bedivere. The story of Bedivere and the brand Excalibur is now relegated into a mere episode, still too episodical for the solemnity of the closing piece. The reader's uncertainty about the destiny of Arthur is still left in Arthur's own doubt. He says of the three queens—

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' I am going a long way
With those thou seest,—if indeed I go,
For all my mind is clouded with a doubt.'

The original poem ended with the well-remembered musical line, 'And on the mere the wailing died away.' But now the poet resumes—

' At length he groan'd, and turning slowly clomb
The last hard foothill of that iron crag.'

A vision was vouchsafed to the last of the knights—

' Then from the dawn it seem'd there came, but faint
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,
Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
Around a king returning from his wars.'

Sir Bedivere, 'beneath an arch of handes,' watched the ship disappearing—

' And the new sun rose bringing the new year.'

It is interesting to compare with this the original ending of the piece. (By-the-way, the ten volume edition gives the 'Morte d'Arthur' twice over.)

' There came a bark that blowing forward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port; and all the people cried
"Arthur is come again: he cannot die!"
Then those that stood upon the hills behind
Repeated: "Come again! and thrice as fair;"
And, further inland, voices echoed, "Come
With all good things, and war shall be no more."
At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I woke, and heard, indeed,
The clear church bells ring in the Christmas morn.'

Here the spiritual import of this poetry, if it may be so called, is brought out, and, taken in connection with the fresh matter intercalated by Mr. Tennyson, acquires some shape and precision. But practically the notion materially suffers. It is not a notion that will bear scrutiny. In a dim, mysterious way it served to point to the Christ, and, we may reverently say, to evoke the dormant Christ in man; but the idea objectively presented to criticism becomes little better than a rhetorical addition to the ecclesiastical legend.

This legend, prosaically stated, was, that the chalice used at the

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Last Supper had been fashioned into a cup from a gem of countless price by Joseph of Arimathea. The 'Holy Grail' is the 'Sang-real,' 'Royal Blood.' The cup had miraculous powers, renewed by the angels, and only the noblest knights could guard it. For some ages none were found worthy of this function, and so the angels hovered in the air, bearing the precious cup, until a temple and order were founded for the preservation of the grail. This relique is claimed by Genoa and also by Valencia, where an agate cup, mounted with gold and gems, is preserved. The Holy Grail is first seen by a sister of Sir Percival's, being one who

'Pray'd and fasted, till the sun
Shone and the wind blew through her, and I
thought
She might have risen and floated when I saw
her.'

The vision was next vouchsafed to Sir Galahad, and henceforward he rides the earth, a living Providence in redressing evil, strengthened by its perpetual presence—

'As in dark tides the glory glides
And starlike mingles with the stars.'

The rest, save three, pursue phantoms, and mostly perish in their quest. Sir Gawain was a type of these—

'I communed with a saintly man,
Who made me sure the quest was not for me;
For I was much wearied of the quest:
But found a silk pavilion in a field,
And merry maidens in it.'

There is a touch of humour about Sir Gawain. Mr. Tennyson has shown various touches of humour in his poems, but he has weeded them out, as he will probably do in this instance. Sir Percival clearly discerned the vision, at what time Sir Galahad vanished into glory—

'A thousand piers ran into the great sea,
And Galahad fled along them bridge by bridge,
And every bridge as quickly as he crost
Sprang into fire and vanished . . .
And o'er his head the holy vessel hung
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
For now I knew the veil had been withdrawn.

Straight beyond the star,
I saw the spiritual city and all her spires
And gateways in a glory like one pearl—
No larger, though, the goal of all the saints—

Strike from the sea; and from the star there
shot
A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there
I dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail
Which never eyes on earth again shall see.'

Honest Sir Bors sees it. Wrapt up in love for Lancelot, and hardly asking for it himself—

'O grace to me—
In colour like the fingers of a hand
Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail
Gilded and past, and close upon it peal'd
A sharp quick thunder.'

Sir Lancelot thought he saw, but so dimly that he was not sure he saw, the vision, so storm-tost by passion, repentance, and despair was he. Here the sacred purpose, which so often runs below the poetic secular narrative, is apparent. We couple Lancelot's imperfect vision with the concluding lines of the former idyll of Elaine—

'So groan'd Sir Lancelot in remorseful pain,
Not knowing he should die a holy man.'

But King Arthur is certain that Sir Lancelot has seen it—that he must have 'some root of knighthood and pure nobleness' which might bear flower—

'Blessed are Bors, Lancelot, and Percivale
For these have seen according to their sight.'

The next poem, 'Pelleas and Ettarre,' is certainly unpleasing in subject, though full of power. It is a companion poem to 'Vivien.' After the 'Idylls' comes a new version of the 'Northern Farmer,' not one whit inferior to its celebrated predecessor, and which will almost require translation for young ladies. 'The Golden Supper' is remarkable as being the only poem to which Mr. Tennyson has prefixed a prose introduction. This is still more necessary in the poem 'The Higher Pantheism.' He might as soon have versified the hardest bit of Spinoza. Then comes the 'Lucretius.' The same magazine that originally published it thought it necessary to give a commentary upon it in the succeeding number. But perhaps the 'Lucretius' is, upon the whole, the most wonderful poem that Mr. Tennyson has written. We trust the reader will observe the astonishing variety exhibited within

the narrow compass of this slender volume, from the pathos of the 'Idylls' to the bathos of the 'Northern Farmer'—from the transcendentalism of the philosophical poems to the simple beauty of the lyrics. Mr. Tennyson's art is so consummate that a shallow criticism will speak rather of his perfection than of the breadth; but he illustrates Mr. Mill's remark, that we must now look for the highest originality in minds of the highest culture.

Those who are curious on the subject of Tennysonian bibliography will find much to interest them in the new ten volume edition. It contains several poems which have not been included in previous editions, although well known to the real students of his writings, notably the three sonnets on a 'Coquette,' which appeared originally in one of the annuals. The same annuals, if explored, would give further poems very well deserving of republica-

tion. Lines by Mr. Tennyson, before he took to the magazines, appeared in very out-of-the-way places. Tennysonian readers will remember how Mr. Tennyson has again and again recalled and readmitted a poem, and how he has hesitated and altered epithets. He is his own most vigorous but somewhat vacillating critic. Let the reader, for instance, travel through the different editions of 'The Palace of Art.' An approach to finality is made in this complete edition; we are afraid that the volume of the 'Idylls' is now complete. The new book will not detract from Mr. Tennyson's reputation, but we do not think that he has in any degree added to it. If he has sought to realize Coleridge's idea that the Arthurian legends might make a national epic, he has, we think, failed, and his failure has involved some sacrifice to his higher and more spiritual teachings.



ST. VALENTINE IN GERMANY.

TRÜCHEN, the rosy-cheeked, stands at the casement,
 Musingly looketh she out on the Rhine;
 Opens her blue eyes with dreamy amazement,
 Finds her white fingers clasped fondly in mine.

Trüchen draws back; but the closer I hold her—
 Partly unwilling—in tender embrace;
 Not a word saith she; but I, getting bolder,
 Turn her red pretty cheeks up to my face.

Trüchen mysterious, shy, and capricious,
 Trüchen tormenting, yet tender and true;
 Whose airs are demure, and whose graces delicious,
 Butterfly-queen! *I am hunting for you.*

Trüchen, the flaxen-haired, blushes and trembles,
 Draws her breath heavily, smiles with a sigh;
 Then her embarrassed demeanour resembles
 That of a dove when the merlin is nigh.

I have 'stolen a march,' to be thus in the morning
 So early astir with the golden-eyed day;
 Shall I ask you a question, without any warning,
 Ere the 'Frau' cometh down, wouldst thou give me a Nay?

Come, come, just a word, pretty Trüchen, I ask it,
 Just one tiny word: Is this little hand mine?
Ro'ber, you've stolen the pick of the basket,
 Blushing, she said, *I am thy Valentine!*



THE BALLET-GIRLS OF PARIS.

II.

IN my first article I described what is the life of the majority of the ballet-girls of the French theatres—instancing the career of Mdlle. Rose as a fair example of the most successful of the sisterhood. The sad fate which awaits most members of this strange profession was noted, presenting the dark side of a picture of which Anglo-Saxon countries happily know little, and only those learn from observation in Paris itself. There is another side to it, however, much pleasanter to contemplate than that already described; and I may as well illustrate it by the story of a young ballet-girl, told to me by my friend Monsieur Paul, as we sat sipping post-prandial cognac at the Grand Café. Her motives for becoming a *danseuse*, her conduct on the stage and off, were as praiseworthy and proper as one would find in any class of society. I will follow as nearly as I can the words of Paul in relating it. They had just brought out, he said, at the Porte St. Martin, a great spectacular piece, of rare attractions, requiring a very numerous *corps de ballet*. The sub-manager, a friend of Paul's, had invited him behind the scenes on the first night of the representation. He went, and had his usual chat with his favourites in the corps, in the green-room, before the rising of the curtain. While in the green-room he noticed, sitting quite apart from the rest of the girls, a young *danseuse* whom he had seen a few times before, and to whom he had always spoken in vain; she never would answer him; and he always remarked that she treated the other gallants in the same distant way. On this evening she was sitting apart, and Paul observed that tears were rolling down her cheeks, which were thickly rouged. She was attired, very thinly, in scant pink gauze. He approached her, and, touched by her evident depression, asked what the matter was. She

shook her head, and turned away. One of the other girls—a bold hussy—came up, on this, and said—

'Can't you guess what's the matter with our fine little Mademoiselle Eulalié? Why she's crying because she's got to appear in that light dress, and offer the king, in the play, a goblet of wine, kneeling. How terrible! And the speaker bounced off, laughing.

'We Frenchmen,' said Paul to me, 'are so hardened by our devil-may-care life that we are seldom susceptible to pity. But I was really touched by Mdlle. Eulalié's emotion; perhaps it was because she was unusually pretty, and so wonderfully fresh and innocent.'

During the play, Paul saw her on the stage. The poor thing was forcing a smile during the first acts; but when it came to the place where she had to kneel and thus expose herself to the rude gaze of the *parterre*, she hesitated and trembled like a leaf; and the tears came once more, and by an agonizing effort were forced back. When she arose, her own modest colour so mounted to her face as to quite outblush her rouge paint; and after the last act, she went into the green-room again—and fainted. Paul felt interested, and, *blasé* as he was, from his heart sympathised with the poor thing. It wasn't a sham, he thought, and he considered himself a good judge. In a week or so, after a good deal of effort, he managed, by getting the sub-manager to introduce him, to make Mdlle. Eulalié's acquaintance; and he assured me he never was further from having an unworthy motive in his life. He assured me, further, that from the beginning of his acquaintance with this poor girl to its end, he never had any dishonourable thought concerning her.

'And thank God,' continued Paul, 'she's out of that abominable place now!'

After an acquaintance in which he

had to win her confidence by the most gradual steps—for she was most timid as well as modest—he learned her history, and with it, to venerate and respect this same poor, simple ballet-girl.

‘I suppose,’ said Paul, ‘my interest in her at first arose from the difference between her and the rest; she was a phenomenon.’

Her real name was Françoise Teller—Eulalié was her fancy stage-name. She was eighteen. Her father was dead; her mother had remarried, her second husband having been till within a year a joiner; but meeting with an accident, the stepfather had become imbecile, and was the inmate of a suburban *maison de santé*. Her mother was a very sickly but pious Protestant woman, and by her second husband had a family of three small girls. Since her husband’s misfortunes she had hardly been able to work at all; what she did was to copy documents for lawyers and at libraries; for she had had a good education, and this has always been a regular occupation for many French people of the lower bourgeois class. Madame Reynard, whose father had been poor, had learned it in her younger days, and had since taught Françoise to write ‘a lawyer-like hand.’ It appears that a nephew of the unfortunate stepfather was acting in scenic pieces at the Châtelet, and was an enthusiast in his art. He, observing the advantage which young Françoise possessed—her beauty, grace of movement, and freshness—proposed that she should take lessons for the ballet. This shocked the mother, who refused her consent; but the heroic little girl, though shuddering at the prospect, was so earnest in favour of the plan, that she at last won Madame Reynard’s consent.

The girl saw the difficulties her mother had in providing means for her subsistence and for the support of the unfortunate invalid at the asylum, and was ambitious only to earn enough to aid in supporting them. Her cousin was able to be of great assistance; he engaged a master at less than half-price, to be paid from the future earnings of

Françoise; and when she became proficient, which she did very rapidly (owing to her zeal and natural quickness), he procured her a good situation at one of the smaller theatres, where she at first, of course, appeared only *en corps*. She rose quickly, had the satisfaction of carrying home a goodly number of francs each week, and of seeing both her mother and her poor imbecile stepfather supplied with many comforts of which they had been long deprived.

The occasion of which Paul spoke, when she was so agitated and shed tears, was the first in which she had been called on to appear as a prominent figure in the scene, and to dress with that voluptuous *abandon* which is peremptory on the Paris stage; and that explains her distress. But her excellent behaviour did not cease with this emotion and sacrifice. When she came to the ballet, rehearsal mornings, she was observed to carry a little parcel of papers, most neatly wrapped up and tied; and at intervals, when she was not wanted on the stage, she was seen writing with great rapidity at one of the ricketty deal tables in the green-room.

She was doing her mother’s copy work.

And more. Immediately after rehearsal, which lasted till or after twelve, she hurried home and continued her copying, working at it three or four hours; then she went to the market and bought a basket of fruit, with which she rode in an omnibus to the asylum, and treated the imbecile father to her modest purchases. Returning home, she took a slight dinner, washed up the dishes, and was off again buying the next day’s provisions. At six she returned to the theatre, where she stayed till after midnight. When the weary spectacle at last came to its grand sulphur and aerial scene, and the curtain swung heavily down, shutting out the staring gazers of the audience, and leaving the stage blank and desolate, her cousin escorted her quickly through the street home. She rose promptly at six in the morning, made breakfast, cleared up the dishes and set at

once to writing again. And working thus, excellent Françoise managed to gather, toward the end of her stage career (for she was, happily, near its end when Paul became acquainted with her), about one hundred francs a week, which was a capital income for poor Parisian folk. And there never was a word of scandal whispered against her; but it was remarked by all, how modestly and uprightly she bore herself in all her toil and trouble.

'Now,' said Paul, 'is not this a character worth celebrating in a story? Why don't you, who write for the papers and so on, take it up?'

'Perhaps I shall,' said I. 'Where is Mdlle. Eulalié now?'

'Such a girl,' replied my friend, 'was sure to be found out and appreciated. A young lawyer's clerk, a Protestant, of thoroughly respectable family, and a competency in money, was struck by her modesty, her zeal, her heroism. She became his wife six months ago, and is studying under his affectionate tuition.'

One good redeeming Paris story, thought I. But it is perhaps a single flower in a desert—or rather, a gentle violet in a huge *parterre* of flaunting peonies. As has been said, the lives of most ballet-girls are almost unmitigatedly bad. And how should they be otherwise? The associations of the theatre in any country are too apt to be demoralizing, especially to the young and helpless; and in France, where morality is at a low ebb, the evil is magnified. But the public must be amused, at any cost; and the ruin of a few score of young girls is a trifle, when put in comparison with the ambition of the enterprising manager to delight his patrons with a display of seductive female beauty.

It was charming indeed to listen to the story of Eulalié; and when I saw Paul, callous, *blasé* youth of the world, moved with genuine emotions as he told it, I felt that the gay Parisian nature, after all, was not altogether hopeless.

FLACCUS THE FLÂNEUR.

A FEW years ago it happened that the present Poet Laureate of England and a friend were seated in a boat moored at anchor off one of the loveliest spots on one of the loveliest though least-known rivers in these islands—the Fal, in the western county of Cornwall. A silence nebulous with much tobacco-smoke had prevailed for some time between the pair. Mr. Tenyson was deeply engaged in examining, through the frequent fumes of the nicotine, the build and manufacture of the little barque: his companion was occupied with contemplating the landscape, over which there brooded far and wide the 'summer's golden mist.' 'There's nothing new in this,' at last uttered, his pipe still pendent in his mouth, the author of the 'Idylls.' 'In what?' was the natural inquiry. 'Why, in this boat in which we are. See,

here' (and the cloud-compelling bard produced from a pocket of his waistcoat a small edition of the 'Odyssey' of Homer), 'you have it all described—sketched from the life.' And the Laureate, opening the Elzevir at the fourth book of the wanderings of Ulysses, translated aloud a certain passage illustrative of the principles of boat-building among the ancient Greeks, pointing out the while to his listener each particular spar, beam, and timber whose account had been anticipated by the blind bard of Scio.

'There's nothing new: you have it all described—sketched from the life.' A remark, this, capable of a far more extensive application than to any matter of merely naval architecture. 'Whate'er men do, my satire's motley theme,' wrote Juvenal; and as a question of fact men do, have done, and will do

pretty much the same at all periods of the world's history. 'Tis an affair rather of repetitions than parallels. The plot of the drama is identical: there are a few variations in the scenery: the dresses are different and the names of the actors are changed. That is all. Toga or frock-coat, pallium or Parisian robe, they each alike cover human breasts, and as far as the motives by which human breasts are animated—their hopes, fears, joys, pleasures, aversions—in these there is a marvellous monotony. The world does not change, it merely develops: with the statement of which incontrovertible fact we may be allowed to drop all ethical reflections of a character so trite and well-worn as the foregoing, and glance at the life some twenty centuries ago of which our own life to-day is but the reflex and the anti-type.

A great capital: a long crowded drive with a promenade on either side; but the capital is not London, and the drive is not in Hyde Park. The place Rome: the exact scene the Appian Way. 'Tis the very Paradise of the *flâneur*. A glorious sun: a gay sight: celebrities from every quarter of the civilised world: brave men and fair women: men, some of them, whose names are synonyms for insolvency, and women who have left, or are about to leave, or wish to leave their husbands: knots of talkers and gossip-mongers here and there discussing the last public act of the Emperor's prime minister, the probability of the news of the Thracian victory being true, and the chance which young Telephus has in some athletic sports that are coming off in the field of Mars on the morrow. Presently there strolls through the throng a short, moderately stout, and natively-dressed little man, who, we promise you, attracts plenty of attention as he passes. 'A monstrous lucky fellow that,' whispers some one to his friend; 'they say he's more influence at Court than any other man going. 'Gad, it's worth being a poet on those terms.' 'Yes,' says another, 'he is lucky—a deal more so than he deserves.

They talk of his poems as so exquisite. On my word, I can never find anything in them for the life of me.' But the speaker of these remarks is a disappointed bard, and the object of them is the most successful man of the day, most perfect of lyrists, most genial of satirists, most thoroughgoing of *flâneurs*, and most pleasant of philosophers. Who? you ask. Why, who should it be but the freedman's son, a Venusian by birth, Horace by name? Look at him once more as he saunters idly by, with a nod to this one and a smile to that. Nothing is lost on him. Those quick, busy, restless eyes take everything in, and while with rather dandified air he seems to be intent on arranging the folds of his toga with an eye only to the best effect, he is drinking in the whole scene, and mentally taking notes of all the fragmentary utterances which he hears. Presently our listless *flâneur* is addressed by a servant: an invitation from Mæcenas: the great man is just coming up in his *lectica*; 'Will Horace accept of a seat, and return with him to dinner?' 'Ah,' murmur half a dozen poetasters to each other as they see what is passing, 'what a hit Horace has made! What a fortunate, prosperous dog he is!'

Now, perhaps, but not always. He has had an uphill game to play, to a great extent, this pleasant, gay-looking gentleman: but he has played it manfully and well, and the result is that he is the most popular representative of literature, prose or verse, of his day. It was said just now, he has made what is most emphatically a hit. He has struck out a line for himself. As for his lyrics, nothing at all like them has been seen in Rome: their metre, their inspiration, their method—all these are new. As for his descriptions of society, they are simply unapproachable. He has sketched every phase of it. He has photographed Roman life from every possible point of view; and in his sharp, clear notes he has run through the whole gamut of existence in the Imperial City. His works are in the boudoir of the

fashionable lady, of the statesman, the gay, roving youth, in the mansions of the rich and the houses of the poor. And why? Because he has painted in his exquisite cameo style all this, and much more: Beyond a doubt, our friend Horace has made a hit.

Let us take a retrospective glance at the man's fortunes and career. They will tell us something not only of his own nature, but of that of the times upon which his lot has been cast. As a youngster he was sent to the University—there was but one in those days, and that was at Athens. He worked with a will, and as he had been grounded well by a schoolmaster of the old *régime*, who believed the birch to be a necessary stimulus to the memory, he made more than fair progress. One fine day the streets of Horace's old University town were thrown into a state of excitement. There were the clatter of hoofs, the glitter of steel, and the echoing note of the martial horn. General Brutus had come, flushed with revolutionary triumph. 'Twas the old, old story, and he would be a soldier. Once enrolled among the officers of Brutus' army, Horace rapidly got promotion, and in a very little time he gained his company; in other words, he was appointed tribune at the head of a legion. Then came Philippi. The military enthusiasm deserted our friend; he gave up campaigning, and—the natural thing for him under the circumstances to do, for the old Italian capital possessed just the same absorptive and centripetal force as the modern English—went to Rome, whither on his arrival he found that, like Virgil, he had been despoiled by the soldiers of the victorious Antony of all his patrimony. More fortunate than many of his friends, he managed to get a place under Government—a clerkship in the Civil Service, and in a very decent department, too—the Treasury. The salary attached was modest enough, and Horace, though sufficiently economical, found it a tightish fit even for one. That he had a knack of versifying he knew: he had also a decided taste for

literary employment. Under these circumstances, that the career of the Roman *flâneur*, as we have ventured—why will presently be seen—to call him, may appear at all points the exact analogue of so many careers perfectly familiar to us at the present day, the young Treasury clerk took to writing.

'Most wretched men
Are cradled into poetry by wrong:
'They learn in suffering what they teach in song.'

It is difficult to conceive that Horace ever was veritably wretched, and as for his initiation into authorship, we have it on his own authority that the great reason which determined him to take the leap was simply 'that eternal want of pence which bothers public men.' However, as a matter of fact it is probable that the first theme which called forth the powers of the young poet was the loss which he had suffered at the hands of the victorious party (Epode xvi.). At no time of his life was Horace naturally fond of work, and during the period of his Treasury clerkship he seldom occupied his pen save under the pressure of a certain amount of pecuniary compulsion.

In the selection of his friends and of his patrons he was equally fortunate. His abilities and pleasing manners strongly recommended him to Pollio, illustrious whether as a soldier, diplomatist, or orator, and to Vulpidius Rufus, distinguished for his fine literary taste. Varius and Virgil were both of them his contemporaries; and there is a great charm in such glimpses as we can get of the equal intercourse of these three friends. All of them were alike aspirants for literary fame, Horace being considerably the junior of both the other two. Of the many testimonies that we have to the admirable social qualities of the Venusian, there is none more striking than the ready manner in which he was received into the best set of intellectual Rome—that in which Virgil and Varius moved. It was to the former of these that he was indebted for what coloured the whole complexion and diverted the entire course of his subsequent life—the

introduction to Mæcenas; and it speaks much for the generous, ungrudging nature of the poet of the *Æneid* that he should so freely have participated with his friend a favour of which it would not have been strange had he wished to preserve a monopoly—an acquaintance with the great literary patron and æsthetic arbiter-in-chief of the day. We will terminate these few biographical details with the account and the results of that introduction as sketched by Horace himself, in the admirable version of the most recent and best translator of the original, the late Professor Conington:—

'In truth to luck I care not to pretend,
For 'twas not luck that mark'd me for your friend:

Virgil at first, that faithful heart and true,
And Varius after named my name to you.
Brought to your presence, stammeringly I told

(For modesty forbade me to be bold)
No vaunting tale of ancestry of pride,
Of good broad acres and sleek nag to ride,
But simple truth: a few brief words you say,

As is your wont, and wish me a good day.
Then nine months after graciously you send,
Desire my company and hail me friend.'

The favour of Mæcenas brings with it, first, the restitution of Horace's paternal property, and then, at subsequent periods, the gift of the Sabine farm and the villa at Tivoli. Henceforward his life is that of the loungeur and the *littérateur*, the social moralist, the speculator in human nature, the collector of material for the reveries of the ethical philosopher;—a life full of many-sided interest: easy, placid, and a trifle selfish; a life spent in constant dinings out, in occasional spurts of industry at home, where dreamy self-satisfaction is now and again somewhat rudely interrupted by stern self-reproaches for dilettante indolence, and whose blissful serenity is occasionally ruffled by the attacks of envy which his rapid success provoked from his less fortunate competitors; a life passed now amid the dissipations of town, now in rural retreats, amid trees, and flowers, and hills, now in hymning the praises of this mistress, now of that—a life, in fact, of much the same kind as

scores of poets have passed since, and as scores more, *mutatis mutandis*, will pass again. What we want now to do is to picture to ourselves—and we have abundant opportunity for making the picture—this light-hearted poetic saunterer through the tracks of existence, in the same colours and with the same effect that would have characterised such a sketch had it been taken at the time itself.

'Nine months after graciously you send;' from which it appears, as was in effect the case, that the great man, Mæcenas, was indisposed to extend any very enthusiastic measure of friendship to Horace on his first introduction. Why should this have been? The reason is not far to seek. In one of his earliest satires, and one which of all is the least fitted for translation, the young poet had lashed freely and indiscriminately on every side. Amongst others, Mæcenas had not escaped. His name was not, indeed, mentioned, but the allusion to a gentleman of foppish habits under the thin disguise of Malchinus, was unmistakably plain. How, it may be asked, did Mæcenas eventually conquer the antipathy which there is no doubt he first felt to the young satirist? It must be remembered—as we shall have occasion presently at greater length to show—that Horace was as much celebrated at this time in Rome for his social gifts as for his poetical powers. Of such a companion as he must have heard Horace universally confessed to be, Mæcenas stood specially in need. His spirits were far from uniformly good: his health was extremely uncertain. To such a man in such a state the society of the young Venusian must have been better than the prescriptions and nostrums of all the doctors in Rome. Thus it was that a connection originated between these two men, whose names are indissolubly united by the association of fortunes, which death alone was destined to terminate. In an age when the spirit of servility was rampant, when honest praise was the language of failure, and power to be conciliated was fawned on, it must have been re-

freshing to note the relations which existed between Horace and Mæcenas; to find a patron who required no other homage than that which equal accords to equal and friend to friend, and to whom 'the republic of intellect' was something more than a meaningless phrase. But these unquestionably were the terms upon which the friendship of Mæcenas with Horace was commenced and continued. A consistent and uniform independence is one of the main features in Horace's life.

Unfortunately for the members of the profession of literature at Rome, there were very few patrons of the stamp of Mæcenas. Nothing can be more unsatisfactory and degrading than the picture which Martial and Juvenal both draw of the indignities to which the authors of the day who were desirous of supporting themselves by what they wrote had to submit. That the great man refuses to be content unless every fifth line in the composition conveys to him a compliment expressed or implied is a small thing. 'If you wish to have your prosperity in any way advanced by him, or your store of worldly goods increased, you must spend long and weary hours in paying him court. You must be up betimes in the morning, when he holds his early levée before business hours; be satisfied to wait, and remember to be scrupulously civil to the butler, when he tells you that his master cannot see you now, but will perhaps see you if you call two hours hence. If when you act as you are instructed to act, the same pampered menial contemptuously informs you that his master is still occupied and inaccessible, but has sent you this—giving you a piece of silver, worth, perhaps, according to our reckoning, half-a-crown,—you must take it with a smile, and bless the giver and the gift. Once or twice, perhaps, in the course of the year the great man will ask you to dinner—that is to say you will find yourself placed at a kind of upper servants' table, served with second-rate dishes, relays of slaves taking up their position behind you to see that you pocket nothing of the

tempting goods on the table.' Mæcenas was, as became a man descended from Tuscan kings, far too much of a gentleman by instinct to tolerate such an order of things as this; while as for Horace, we may be quite certain that he would sooner have taken himself to his paternal trade—tax collecting, or sausage selling, whichever it may have been—than have gone through what Martial tells us his destiny compelled him to suffer. Horace's general views on this question may be gathered from these lines:—

'You'd blush, good Lollius, if I judge you right,
To mix the parts of friend and parasite.
'Twixt parasite and friend a gulf is placed,
Wide as between the wanton and the chaste.
Yet think not flattery friendship's only cure:
A different vice there is, perhaps a worse,
A brutal boorishness which fain would win
Regard by unbrushed teeth and close-shorn skin,
Yet all the while is anxious to be thought
Pure independence acting as it ought.'

We have ventured to speak of the writer of these didactic lines as a *flâneur*. Our justification is to be found in the general view which Horace takes of life, of himself, and of the functions in life which he is destined to fulfil. His attitude is consistently that of a critic on human affairs, judging the rightness or wrongness, the folly or wisdom of human actions by the standard of his own serenely imperturbable philosophy. The vice of extremes, the happiness that lies in the mean, the propriety of enjoying while you can what it is given you to enjoy—these are the constantly-recurring *communes loci*, the sum and substance, concentration and amalgam of his creed.

'But what's my sect? you ask me; I must be
A member, sure, of some fraternity;
Why no: I've taken no man's shilling; none
Of all your fathers owns me for a son:
But where the weather drives me, I invite
Myself to take up quarters for the night.'

Morally and physically, metaphorically and actually there you have the man.

Leigh Hunt himself was not more wedded to London; Captain Morris was not more enamoured of the

sweet shady side of a grove in Pall Mall, than was Horace of Rome. The picture that the bard of Tibur presents when he had retired for a few days to his country house, is well known enough, and just what we might expect. We have the poet sitting in his garden, with its curiously-arranged walks, and shrubs quaintly clipped so as to imitate, in Dutch fashion, the forms of birds and animals, perfectly content and happy so long as he has a friend to talk to and drink with, or so long as there is a prospect of a visit from his old flame Tyndaris. Withdraw any of these conditions, and he longs to be back at Rome. As he grew older, his stays at his Sabine farm or villa at Tibur increased in length, but they were regulated more by reasons of health than of taste. Rome and Bais—our London and Brighton, though the latter, perhaps, with its public gaming-tables, more closely resembled Baden—these are his two favourite haunts. He loves to lounge along the Via Sacra, even at the risk of meeting occasional bores: he will stroll out into the circus when evening descends, to note what is passing. His position, he frankly tells us, is as enviable as a man's position can be. He has enough of worldly possessions. He knows every person worth knowing in Rome. Being a bachelor—it is impossible to conceive of Horace as anything else—he is under no obligation to return all the hospitality which he meets; and when he does want to see his friends, he asks them to one of his suburban retreats. He is not compelled to trouble himself about appearances:

'Now on my bob-tailed mule I jog at ease
As far as e'en Tarentum, if I please;
A wallet for my things behind me tied,
Which galls my crupper as I gall his side.
And no one rates my meanness as they rate
Yours, noble Tullius, when you ride in state
On the Tiburtine road, five slaves *en suite*,
Wineholder and etceteras all complete.'

The way in which the poet would order his daily life was probably the same as that adopted by most men of letters at Rome of moderately inexpensive and not extravagantly studious habits. In the morning, he

tells us, his breakfast done—and a Roman breakfast was a very simple affair, a crust of bread and a little fruit—he would lounge about the circuses and Forum. He was not an early riser, seldom leaving his bed till ten; and by the time his stroll was concluded he had acquired an appetite for a light lunch. This, with an hour or so's writing, would fairly occupy him till the Appian Way, the Campus, or the racket-courts—the three Roman equivalents for the Park, Lord's Cricket Ground, and the club billiard-rooms—were beginning to fill; and then the little man would wander out in quest of character, or, if he was disposed for it, the healthy exercise of a game at ball.

'So to the field and ball; but when the sun
Bids me go bathe, the field and ball I shun.'

As an ordinary rule, however, Horace would have his bath after his exercise, and emerge from it fresh and hungry for the great event of the day, the *cena*—a meal which is occasionally translated by our supper, but which was in reality our dinner. It is worth while to have a moment's look at the bath life of ancient Rome—the closest analogue which there is of our modern club life. It was at these very often magnificent establishments that friends met each other, interchanged all the latest gossip and scandal, passed their criticism on the most recent phase of the imperial policy, or the last new elopement in high life. Petronius Arbiter has left on record more than one amusing sketch of what these baths were, and what passed on within and around them—the bustle, the noise, the laughter—for the bathers, seated neck-high in the water, banded jokes, repartees, and epigram *ad libitum*—the cries of the itinerant tradesmen, who walked round the porticoes, to tempt purchasers and to sell their wares. Seneca, too, has drawn a lively account of the inconvenience of lodging in the rooms which were latterly built over the baths. No one who has not a brain of cast iron, he says, should attempt it.

It was amid such scenes as these

that Horace lived and moved and had his being. A careless loungeur, he seemed to heed nothing; but not an episode passed which was not straight entrusted to the mindful tablets of that adaptive memory. It was seldom, we know, that he could leave the baths without at least one invitation for dinner; and did he ever escape, he had no sooner, he, through the mouth of his slave, tells us, sat down for a quiet evening's work, than a messenger arrived in hot haste from Mæcenas, demanding his instant attendance, as the great man had a party of friends, and had been searching the city all over to find his poet. How many other excellently studious an intention has been violated, since the time of Horace, in precisely the same way?

As has been already said, Horace was not naturally an industrious man; and there is not the slightest doubt that this indisposition to steady, continuous work was, to a great extent, fostered by the request in which the man's society was. Reproachfully remarks his friend Damasippus:

'How seldom do you write: we scarcely hear
Your tablets called for four times in the year.'

Fond of seeing life under as many aspects as possible, the convivial parties which Horace frequented were of various and widely different kinds. An *habitué* of state dinners, he would drop in just as often upon a band of young men as they were sitting on into the night over their wine. Occasionally, at such times as these, he would figure as the peace-maker upon the scene. Perhaps the proposition of the health of one of the reigning beauties of Rome would give rise to an argument; and the *argumentum verborum* might threaten to lead up to the *argumentum buculinum*. Hot words would be heard; there would be angry disputations as to who was the exclusive recipient of the favours of Phryne or the love of Lais. Faces were fast getting flushed, and blows were imminent, when the suave Venusian would remind them that it was quite out of date—a disgraceful barbarism, in fact—to

quarrel over their wine, and then, with exquisite tact and grace, would proceed to rally some member of the company, 'the brother of the Opuntian Megillus,' on an attachment to some fair siren, till good humour was restored, and the words of harmony circulated with the cup of peace.

There is an exquisitely complete sketch which the poet gives in one of his odes of an afternoon at the hunting-box of a young Roman, whose guest he probably was at the time for some days. It was a delicious situation. In front the windows commanded a distant view of the Mediterranean. To the right would be seen the summit of Mount Soracte, and to the left a tall cypress grove, backed by the stately Apennines. The old Falernian had circulated freely enough; but the host of Horace was suffering from mental depression. Something had gone wrong. He may have had a run of heavy losses at play; he may have been unfortunate in some little *affaire du cœur*; or the young man may have been of a political turn of mind, and may have been thwarted in forming some party combination which he had wished. The poet, we may suppose, had tried quip and joke to rouse his friend, but in vain. At last he (Horace) rises, and walking up to the window, points in the direction of the snow-clad summit—

'See how the winter blanches
Soracte's giant brow!
Hear how the forest branches
Groan for the weight of snow.'

Then the moral—the moral of pretty well all the poems of this Epicurean lyrist:

'Give to the gods the guidance
Of earth's arrangements. List!
The blasts at their high guidance
From the vexed deep desist,
Nor 'mid the cypress riot,
And the old elms are quiet.

'Enjoy without foreboding
Life as the moments run;
Away with care corroding,
Youth of my soul, nor shun
Love for whose smile thou'rt suited,
And 'mid the dancers foot it.

' While youth's hour lasts beguile it,
Follow the field, the camp, }
Each manly sport till twilight
Brings on the vesper lamp;
Then let thy loved one lap her
Fond feelings in a whisper.*

Apropos of the athletic allusion in the foregoing extract, Horace, it must be borne in mind, was a poet of an essentially athletic and manly turn of mind. His writings teem with allusions to the sports of the Campus—the Beaufort House grounds of the Romans—and the exercises of the *palæstra*. No bard cast in a sickly mould he—the composer of sweet lays though he be—who would bid the youth pass his days in a ceaseless succession of sighs, for ever rhyming in a mournful strain to his mistress's eyebrow. It was Horace who was the first to lift up his voice in remonstrance and reproach when he witnessed anything like an undue and injurious indulgence of the tender passion—herein, as in all other matters, consistently true to the central and guiding principle of his philosophical creed—undeviating adherence to the *juste milieu*. Love as a pastime, that is well enough. As a man of the world, and to a certain extent a lady's man, Horace understands this. What he does not understand is a languishing and exclusive devotion which takes its victim away from all his accustomed friends, and from all his usual employments. We know, from Horace himself, and from the very same ode in which he takes Lydia to task for her selfish monopoly of Telephus, how a Roman man of fashion and muscle would pass his afternoon. The boudoir was, in the ordinary course of things, by no means neglected; but there were other matters to attend to as well. There was the ride in the Roman Row; there was the swim in the Tiber; the *palæstra*, with its wrestling and boxing—for, like Byron, the young Latin aristocrat considered it *de rigueur* to know how to handle the gloves, and to give a clever fall. There was a time when Telephus

excelled in all this: now what has come to him?

' Why rides he never, tell us,
Accoutred like his fellows,
For curb, and whip, and horsemanship
And martial bearing jealous?

' Why hangs he back demurment
To breast the Tiber's current,
From wrestler's oil and from the coil
Of poisonous snake abhorrent?

' Vixi puellis nuper idoneus,
Et militavi non sine gloria.'

' I have lived till of late well approved by the fair, and have not without glory made war in their cause.' So writes the Venusian of himself. What are the facts of the case? Was he a gallant so successful as he is evidently desirous himself to have it thought? Here is a great question to discuss, and one which will never be satisfactorily cleared up. Love lays, it is true, Horace has written by the score; and his French biographer, Baron Walckenaer, doubts not for a moment that Horace experienced all the stormy vicissitudes of amatory sentiment—that he knew the lover's hopes, his madness and despair; his torments of jealousy, and his satiety of pleasure. But, continues this writer, 'La violence du tempérament n'est jamais une preuve de la force du sentiment, et celui de l'amour n'a toute son énergie quand il existe dans toute sa sincérité.' The conclusion, therefore, to which the acute French critic comes is that with all his protestations, vows, apostrophes, and what not else, Horace was never sincerely in love: 'On trouvera bien difficilement dans les œuvres d'Horace des passages qui puissent faire soupçonner qu'il ont jamais connu ces plaisirs du cœur si vifs et si pénétrant, ces délicacies ineffables d'une imagination rêveuse, qui de crée dans l'objet aimé une divinité à laquelle rien sur la terre ne saurait être comparé.'

Neaera—Neaera, by-the-by, was the poet's first flame fresh on his arrival at Rome after Athens and Philippi—Pyrrha, Lydia, Lyce, and Bariné—these and many others made up the catalogue of his amours. But there is every reason to suppose that the majority, if not the

* So translates, by no means perfectly but in a felicitously Horatian spirit, Father Prout.

whole of this group, were the *protégées* of Venus Mithote. Chloe, Horace attempts to captivate, but he terrifies her, and the little coquette runs off to her mother, saying that she is far too young as yet to think of anything like an engagement. So the Venusian continued in a state of single blessedness, pursuing the tenor of his way without conjugal let or hindrance. Perhaps it was well for him—it was certainly well for any lady whom under other circumstances he might have made his wife—that it was so. Father Prout ventures to assign one very substantial reason why 'notwithstanding the delicacy with which he could flatter, and the sprightly ingenuity with which he could amuse the ladies of Rome, he made but small havoc among the hearts of patrician matrons. The fact is, he was in stature a dwarf, with a huge head à la Quasimodo, further endowed with an ungainly prominence of abdomen; eyes which required the constant application of unguents and *collyria*; was prematurely bald like Béranger—

'Moi à qui la sagesse

A fait tomber tous les cheveux;—

and like him, he might break forth into that affecting outburst of naïf despondency derived from the consciousness of a deformed figure:

'Elle est si BELLE

Et moi—et moi—je suis si LAID.'

Probably it was these very facts, if facts they are,—a bitter knowledge of the defects of his own person, and the ill fortune which had so often attended his addresses, that induced him, in a spirit of not wholly justifiable self-assertion to pen the line—

'Et militavi non sine gloria.'

These are weaknesses, no doubt. But there was plenty of genuine honest strength and true manliness about the poet. If he was not a brilliantly successful lover, he was a true friend, stanch and tried: witness his addresses to Virgil, Pompey, and many others.

We have seen Horace as poet, philosopher, and *flâneur*, lover, companion and ally. Let us look at him in another light. We may pre-

sume that he had learned from experience how completely indispensable bodily health was to mental happiness; how the presence of dyspepsia will shroud the brightest day and the most joyous meeting in impenetrable gloom; and, above all things, how necessary it is when you are entertaining your friends at a somewhat protracted symposium, to accelerate the circulation of the wine by the employment of artificial incentives to thirst. Olives, it appears, were not much used for this purpose, by the Romans, nor had they acquired the habit—which is Scotch by origin, we believe—of sending up a red herring before the commencement of the evening's proceedings. On this point and some others we may as well listen to Horace:—

'Tis best with roasted shrimps and Afric snails
To rouse your drinker when his vigour fails:
Not lettuce: lettuce after wine ne'er lies
Still in the stomach, but is sure to rise:
'The appetite, disordered and distressed,
Wants ham and sausage to restore its seat:
Nay, craves for peppered viand, and what not,
Fetched from some greasy cookshop steaming hot.'

Curry, devilled fowl, and mulligatawny were probably unknown to Horace; otherwise they would assuredly have been included in this list.

Or would you have Horace's receipt for a salad—he was famous, by-the-way, as he tells us, among his friends for the manufacture of salad?

'There are two kinds of sauce, and I may say
That each is worth attention in its way.
Sweet oil's the staple of the first, but wine
Should be thrown in, and strong Byzantine wine.

Now take this compound, pickle, wine and oil,
Mix it with herbs chopped small, then make it boil;

Put saffron in, and add when cool the juice
Venafrum's choicest olive-yards produce,
In taste Tiburtian apples count as worse
Than Picene: in appearance the reverse.

'Twas I who first authorities declare
Served grapes with apples, leeks with caviare,
White pepper with black salt, and had them set

Before each diner as his private whet.'

The principle of the whet remains the same to this day: we have changed the details of its composi-

tion, and that is all, and having discovered the appetising power of oysters and of bitters, have certainly advanced a stage.

It has not been our purpose in the course of this article to criticise Horace—that has been done *ad nauseam* already. We have simply wished to see him as a representative of Roman society—a companion acute, agreeable, shrewd, satirical, genial: as a loungeur at what did duty in Rome for the modern clubs, as a saunterer in the public promenades, as a friend, a man of fashion, and a man of the world. 'This little volume'—we quote once more from Father Prout's 'Reliques'—'contains the distilled quintessence of Roman life when at its very acmé of refinement. It is the most perfect portraiture (cabinet size) that remains of the social habits, domestic elegance, and cultivated intercourse of the capital at the most interesting period of its prosperity. But the philosophy it inculcates and the worldly wisdom it unfolds are applicable to all times and to all countries.' Herein lies the reason of the popularity of Horace. As in the past so in the present—it is his humanity which endears him to the hearts of successive generations of readers. This, too, is the cause that his writings have descended to us in their in-

tegrity, untouched by time—that there is no melancholy intimation to the effect *cetera desunt* imprinted on the page of the Venu-sian. We have lost decades of Livy; the epics of Varius are unknown to modern Europe; but we have Horace whole. Writes Lord Lytton, in his newly-published translation of the 'Odes':—'We find evidence of no one who combines so many excellences, be they great or small, as even a very qualified admirer must concede to Horace; no one who blends so large a knowledge of the practical workday world with so delicate a fancy and so graceful a perception of the poetic aspects of human life; no one who has the same alert quickness of movement "from gay to grave, from lively to severe;" no one who unites the same manly and high-spirited enforcement of hardy virtues, temperance and fortitude, devotion to friends and to the native law, with so pleasurable and genial a temperament; no one who adorns so extensive an acquaintance with metropolitan civilisation by so many lovely pictures of rural enjoyment; or so animates the description of scenery by the introduction of human groups and images, instilling, as it were, into the body of outward nature the heart and thought of man.'



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SOCIETY ON THE STAGE.



HOLDING the mirror up to nature may be the mission but has never been the strong point of the modern stage. So at least we may suppose from the evident

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rarity of the virtue in the time of Shakspeare; from all we have heard of the drama since his day; and from all we know of it in our own. Great actors have fulfilled the con-

dition, or they would not have been great actors. Thus nobody can doubt what manner of man Garrick was after the grand tribute to his genius which Fielding puts into the mouth of Partridge. Partridge, as you may remember, could see nothing clever in Mr. Garrick's acting. 'Mr. Garrick,' he said, 'conducted himself as any gentleman would when placed in similar circumstances; whereas the man who played the king talked twice as loud, and made the most of everything he had to say—anybody could see that *he was an actor*.' It is such actors as this man who played the king that have given the prevailing characteristics to the stage; and they have been supported in so doing by audiences made up principally of Partridges.

When people in private life talk stilted language in a false voice, and have a peculiar affectation of manner, we call them '*theatrical*,' or, if we are not too nice in our observance of the English language, '*stagey*.' Neither word is intended to be flattering, and it follows that ordinary manners on the stage must not only deviate from ordinary manners off the stage, but deviate in an objectionable way. A conventional style prevails on the stage—much modified of late, but still prevailing—in a considerable degree, and in full force at the minor theatres. At the last-named establishments you may still see the standard old melodrama and the standard old farces in full bloom. The melodrama is not quite of so antiquated a stamp as, say, '*The Miller and his Men*.' That celebrated piece is of the stage stagey to such an extent that when Mr. Buckstone, in his enthusiasm for '*auld lang syne*,' brought it out in the primitive style a few years ago, a Haymarket audience could make nothing of it. A few old playgoers enjoyed the reminiscence; but the majority found it not only dull but stupid into the bargain. However, thoroughly pronounced representatives of the old school still have their place on the minor boards. The profligate nobleman still flourishes, so does the

poor but honest peasant girl, who declines to become his victim. The rightful heir is still to the front; and the wrongful heir still meets with his deserts at the end of the piece. The villainous lawyer who has forged the title deeds may yet be seen in his native harshness; and the cowardly fellow who has committed the murder, and receives all the kicks while the lawyer receives all the halfpence, shows no sign of disappearing. In a different class of melodrama you may still hear the old familiar sounds of '*Ter-ator, ter-emble*,' '*Release this lady*,' '*Never but with life*,' '*Then, villain, receive thy death*.' Even the serious spectacle—that is to say, the spectacle which is not a burlesque—may yet be seen on the transpontine stage. Notable among pieces of this class is the far-famed '*Mazeppa*,' which has just been revived once more at Astley's. Ducrow, I believe, first played the part of the Tartar prince, and after him another celebrity of the period, *Carlisle*. Nobody dreamed in those days of a lady representing the character; but in more advanced times Miss Menkin undertook the daring deed, and now another lady has followed in her footsteps. The piece itself is about as absurd a specimen of its kind as can well be conceived, and is made more so by its equestrian scenes. For horses, alas! are no longer the strong point of Astley's. The circus, in which Ducrow himself disported upon any number of bare-backed steeds; in which Miss Welford (I think that was the lady's name) enchanted the youth of the metropolis with her graceful and agile equitation; in which Mr. Widdicombe opposed so gentlemanlike a demeanour and so discreet a view of things in general to the ribald conduct and conversation of the clown;—the circus has disappeared, and is turned into a pit, which is half stalls. The horses are therefore confined to the stage, where they never seemed at home, even in the old time. And such horses! In appearance they are more like cows or camels, and they have scarcely a kick or a canter among them. When the Polish

tyrant cries, 'Bring forth the fiery untamed steed!' there is a general shout of laughter, for everybody knows the kind of steed that will come. He is supposed to be

'A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
Who looked as though the speed of thought
Was in his limbs,'—

but in reality he is the quietest animal going, or, perhaps, I should say not going, for he evidently prefers the negative condition. And his quietness is less suggestive of good temper than of age and weakness. Looking at the acquiescent demeanour of the animal, you cannot resist a suspicion that there is a cabman somewhere outside, sitting upon a pair of empty shafts, and regaling himself with beer until the conclusion of the performance shall enable him to take another fare.

The musical parts of the piece are the best rendered; and these are supported by a young lady who, representing a Polish maiden, appropriately sings such songs as 'Cherry Ripe' during the intervals devoted to the preparation of the set scenes.

The old-fashioned farce is not so common as the old-fashioned melodrama, but it may still be seen on the stage. Among its principal stock characters is that of a gay young baronet—mostly Sir Charles or Sir Harry—who, although not described as being in the army, wears that mixture of military uniform and mufli which is considered such 'bad form' in the service. Thus he will wear an ordinary frock-coat and white waistcoat, but his trousers will have red stripes down the sides, and on his head will be a forage cap. He will have his cheeks very deeply rouged, and his hair very tightly curled. He will speak not exactly in a 'haw-haw' manner, but with something of it—quicker and sharper, and with a dismal affectation of sprightliness. His walk will be a swagger, and his way of proceeding characterized extensively by kissing the servant-maid upon every possible occasion.

A favourite opening for a farce of this kind is something like this: The scene is the exterior of a house,

supposed to be an inn, having a swinging sign in front, and a bench for travellers conveniently placed in the middle of the road—a mountainous country at back. Sir Charles or Sir Harry comes on with a prance, from which he never desists during the whole scene, progressing principally backwards and forwards across the stage, but diverging occasionally when running after the servant-maid or threatening to chastise the boots with his riding-whip. This instrument, by-the-way, he never fails to carry, and to flourish about as much as possible, when not engaged in the latter occupation, in connection with a white pocket-handkerchief.

The gay young baronet is fond of introducing himself to the audience in words to this effect, prancing up and down all the time, and flourishing his whip or his handkerchief, as the case may be:—

'Could anything be more absurd than my situation? Here am I, Sir Harry Hiover—the gay, the brilliant, the popular Sir Harry—the caressed of countesses, the adored of duchesses—the envied among men of fashion, and the distinguished among men of wealth for my five hundred thousand a year—here am I, in the height of the London season, with engagements twenty deep, dashing away on a sudden and finding myself, before I know where I am, at an obscure Welsh inn—and all through a little foot and ankle and a glimpse of a ringlet that I caught getting into the railway carriage at the Great Western station. I am afraid time will never teach me wisdom. However, being embarked in the chase, I will proceed. She alighted—she and that monster of an elderly gentleman—at the Llan—well, Llan-something—station, half a dozen miles from this, and, if I mistake not, are dwellers in this same charming hostelry. It was a delightful glimpse—that of the ringlet and the ankle—and it shall not be my fault if I do not make their better acquaintance. Here, you people of the house—waiter, landlord, some of you—come out here!'

The people of the house, who are

of course quite accustomed to travellers arriving at all times in the day, and calling them out instead of seeking them inside, at once appear on the scene, and pay the distinguished traveller every attention; all but the boots, by-the-way, who, being Welsh, talks with a strong Yorkshire accent, and is more than a match for the baronet in conversation. As for the chambermaid already alluded to, she takes the privilege of her sex to keep him at a distance when she chooses, and to let him have only a limited number of salutes. But it is not necessary to describe the progress of the piece. Suffice it to say that the owner of the ankle and the ringlet—who duly makes her appearance while the abigail is resisting a too ardent advance on the part of the baronet—proves to be the cousin of that gentleman, to whom she has been engaged from early youth, though the pair have, curiously enough, never met since that interesting period. Some difficulties naturally now arise; but the young lady, after being very properly shocked at the conduct of her betrothed, forgives him in the end, and it is an understood thing that he is never to look at a maid-servant again. A charming idea for a piece, is it not?

The old-fashioned comedy is not so common to the boards as the old-fashioned farce. If truth must be told, it is rather apt to be dull; and five acts become a serious matter unless all are particularly well wanted. Of course, the comedies of the Restoration and their successors of Queen Anne's time, and the earlier Georgian era, are lively enough: their fault is, that they are rather *too* lively for our decorous days, when the public will tolerate any kind of freedom on the stage but freedom of language, especially if the author has the bad taste to be witty. Congreve and Farquhar have been played a great deal within the memory of many playgoers; but we never hear of them now. Goldsmith, too, is revived at intervals, and 'She Stoops to Conquer' has been recently meeting with considerable success at the

St. James's. Sheridan is not likely to be lost to the boards 'until the times do alter' very considerably; but 'The School for Scandal' and 'The Rivals' are produced at less frequent intervals than they were twenty years ago. As for Mrs. Inchbald, and a crowd of other writers of her time or thereabouts, their visits to the public are very few and far between. Their works indeed are less acceptable than those of an earlier period, for it is to them that the epithet old-fashioned may be most properly applied. A play in which the *dramatis personæ* represent an entirely different class of manners, as they wear an entirely different kind of costume, from those of our own day has an historical character. To be old-fashioned it must be nearer to our own time, and show us a kind of people of whom we have gained some idea from our grandfathers. In fiction of all kinds, this degree of distance as to time is found to be least favourable to attractiveness, and it is only writers of the highest power who are above the rule. The novels of thirty or forty years ago, which reflect contemporary manners, are usually found very dull reading compared with those of the last century, written under similar conditions—though, to be sure, there is another reason, which should be sufficient in itself, why our favourites of the last century should have the advantage.

The old-fashioned comedy proper is certainly not popular in these days, and the same may be said of many comedies produced in our own time, for until recently, it was considered necessary to write according to the old models, and there are still authors who adhere to the same standard, as there are writers of serious plays who cling to the Elizabethan style. There is a rage for realism setting in; but we are still accustomed on the London stage to a great many conventionalities and carelessness as to details which used to be taken as matters of course. Thus, who in real life salutes another person with 'Sir (or Madam), your most obedient?' Yet it is done in dozens of dramas

professing to represent the manners of to-day, which are continually in the playbills. There are many other exploded forms of speech regularly employed, even in new pieces. There are still theatres in London, too, in which you may see people of rank and fashion assembling in a drawing-room destitute of a carpet, and with no other furniture than is necessary for the business of the scene—that is to say, a small table and a couple of chairs. The latter, too, may still be seen dragged down towards the footlights in order that the occupant of the one may tell the occupant of the other the history of his life, or his love, or some other story to which the audience always manifest the most profound indifference. Somebody has said that such recitals always commence with, 'It is now seventeen years since I first met your father on foreign service;' but I have known them varied with, 'It is now twenty-one years since your mother became my bride.' I doubt whether a dozen of the audience ever have a very clear idea of the story, whatever it be. I should not omit to mention, too, that such a drawing-room as I have described is usually entered by the persons of rank and fashion aforesaid in a direct manner through the walls, the more limited accommodation afforded by the door being rigorously ignored; and further, that a gentleman will not unfrequently enter with his hat on, and keep 'the cap to its proper use' during his sojourn in the apartment. However, these blunders get balanced in the long run; for the same gentleman is as likely as not to appear out of doors, say in a street, with nothing upon his head but his hair, while the object of his affections, whom he meets in the same place, wears a delightfully *décolleté* costume, the young lady having been obliged, by dramatic exigencies, to dress early for the ball in the next scene. Such mistakes are not of course made at theatres which profess to be carefully conducted; but even these are not free from occasional lapses, when particular performers choose to have their own

way. There is no actor on the stage who studies details more than the gentleman who created the character of Lord Dundreary. But we nevertheless find his lordship, while on a visit at a country house, appearing in the drawing-room in his dressing-gown and slippers, not by accident, but as a matter of course; the other gentlemen present, not being conventional dandies with no ideas beyond the proprieties of dress, appearing in proper coats and boots. I am sorry to observe also, that in another piece the same eminent actor wears that horrible (in military eyes) mingling of uniform and mufti which I have noticed in the baronet of the old-fashioned farce.

Mr. Robertson's comedies are essentially dramas of the day. The author draws from life as it is, spurning precedents and throwing conventionalities to the winds. His pieces have been put upon the stage—certainly at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, where the best of them appeared—in accordance with his thoroughly realistic ideas. In the representation of 'Caste' and 'Society' there was no ground for cavil, so thoroughly true were the pictures presented to the life that is about us, and I am not here discussing them in any other aspect. In 'Ours,' the details of garrison life were rendered with great correctness. Even the uniforms had the unexampled merit of being correct to a button, though it was sad to see the colonel wearing a leather instead of a brass scabbard to his sword. And the scene in the Crimea—otherwise strikingly effective—was more than could be justified by probabilities. Fancy three ladies—two of them young and unmarried—going out unprotected to the seat of war, arriving before Sebastopol without having turned a hair of their sable mantles, and invading an officer's hut during his absence, while engaged with the enemy, who make a sortie while one of the fair visitors is making a pudding. Such playfulness on the part of the young ladies would be very appropriate at Aldershot, where we have known charming

things of the kind done, to the bewilderment of camp duty; but it is too much to carry the imagination in such a case to the Crimea. In other respects, the interior economy of the hut—supposing its occupants to be remarkably well provided for—is faithfully portrayed. One word, however, about finding the marshal's baton in the French soldier's knapsack. The incident is introduced for the sake of a point; but to find the baton there, not in the spirit but in the flesh—that is to say, in the wood—is surely a stretch of poetic licence. Does the author suppose that a marshal's baton is regularly served out in the French army as part of the kit of a private soldier? I have heard such a statement gravely made by persons who have put a literal interpretation upon the well-known figure of speech. But it is not to be believed that Mr. Robertson could be so foolish; and his joke is as forced as that of the gentleman who carried a nutmeg-grater in his pocket in order to punningly prove comparative superiority when he had entrapped his friends into making the remark that somebody or other was a great man.

We would not willingly be without any one of Mr. Robertson's plays, whatever failings may be found in some of them; but it is well that he should be warned that he will lose his character for realism if he persists in departing from nature as he has done in 'Dreams' and to some extent in 'School.' In the latter piece, for instance (it will always be welcome, if only for the sweet idyll of the milk-jug), there is an obvious absurdity in the idea of an examination of the pupils at an establishment for young ladies being attended by a number of swell men-about-town. The public want sterner stuff than this, in the way of probability, from the author of 'Caste' and 'Society'; and as he is well able to supply it he would do well to take the hint, or a time will come when playgoers will no longer be trifled with, when they will assert themselves, when they will rise as one man, and then deeds

will be done from the contemplation of which the well-regulated mind revolts. Already there are deep murmurings of repressed discontent such as precede the fall of empires.

Mr. Boucicault has long since left legitimate comedy for the drama of effect and sensation. He does not profess to represent society, of whatever class, as Mr. Robertson does. Effect is the first object, and sensation is made wherever possible. In his most successful dramas of the class in question he does not seek to hold the mirror up to nature with a view to a very literal reflection. He prefers to pick and choose—to be natural, no doubt, but to make nature subservient to his own ends. In the 'Colleen Bawn,' for instance—the best play of its kind that he has produced—he is generally truthful as regards character; but his incidents are conventionally romantic, and are treated accordingly. I make this distinction in no spirit of reproach. On the contrary, I consider such a use of material far more consistent with true art than subservience to a spirit of realism which is very well in its way, but is apt to make things too real. The same commendation must be given to pieces like the 'Peep o' Day,' which have owed their existence to similar inspiration. The unfortunate effect of such successes—which the authors themselves have not been able to rival—has been to call into existence a certain class of dramas in which the realism takes the principal instead of the subordinate part. As invention has failed—and how can invention help failing under the force of such peculiar demands?—it has been found necessary to get a set of material accessories together, and make plays to fit them. On a larger and more elaborate scale it is only the old story over again—the imaginary Mr. Crummeles having the play written for the introduction of the pump and the washing-tubs, or the real Mr. Davidge having the piece constructed especially for the performance of the pig. The latter is, I believe, an acknowledged incident in theatrical annals. The 'Streets of London' gave us an idea of what

this kind of thing might come to; and latterly we have had the 'Great City,' beyond which the force of realism—as far as material matters are concerned—can no further go. Its author, Mr. Halliday, had a right to try his hand in beating rivals upon their own ground, and the piece, regarded in the light of its own pretensions, was as good as a piece could be. But Mr. Halliday can do far better things. He has done far better things, and is still doing them; and nobody can know better than himself that the 'Great City' is rather low art. One of its most striking effects was the introduction upon the stage of a real Hansom cab. Surely there must be something wrong in the popular appreciation of the drama, if a Hansom cab, which we pass without notice twenty times a-day in the streets, gains the applause of a London audience in preference to the best dialogue and the best situations imagined by the author. The fault lies with the audience, doubtless; but the author and the manager are surely open to objection if they meet such weaknesses half way. However, this kind of attraction is well-nigh used up. You cannot go much beyond a Hansom cab in your rage for realism; and we suspect that the more sensitive portion of the public will not be much troubled for the future with novelties of the kind. Mr. Halliday, for instance, is devoting himself to works of a better and more congenial character, and has thoroughly outgrown the 'Great City,' as nobody who has seen 'Checkmate' and 'Love's Doctor' can doubt—to say nothing of 'Little Em'ly,' which, adapted as it is from Mr. Dickens' novel, evinces an amount of care and skill that would have made an original piece. Mr. Halliday, by-the-way, does not profess more realism than need be in his dramas of society, as he holds our old friend the mirror up to natural conditions, and is certainly not a representative of conventionalities for their own sake.

Mr. Byron, who, as we all know, is capable of the wildest burlesques, is now steadily cultivating what

may be called the natural drama—in the sense that wine merchants say natural sherry, that is to say, an article free, as far as possible, from those 'fortifying' additions, without which it was supposed impossible to please the public palate. It is pleasant to find that he is as successful in the higher as in the lower walk of his art. Mr. Burnand has also essayed serious writing, but not as yet with much attempt at originality. 'The Turn of the Tide,' for instance, is taken from a novel, and, though an excellent piece, can scarcely be classed among the 'natural' order; while 'Morden Grange,' also taken from a novel, is 'branded' with conventionalism beyond even the public power of appreciation. Mr. Burnand will, doubtless, do better things, and when he has worked a little more of the fun out of him, will, I dare say, consent to settle down into the sober position of one of the best dramatists of the day.

I have now referred to all of the five gentlemen whose works may be said to monopolise the London stage, as far as regular supply is concerned. Mr. Boucicault and Mr. Byron have an advantage over their brother authors in being actors also, and able to appear in person in their own plays. Mr. Boucicault has not, of late years, undertaken the more active line of duty; but everybody knows his claims as a thorough artist in the profession. Mr. Byron has only just begun—in London at any rate—to appear on the boards; but his success has been so considerable as to leave little doubt of his remaining. He will probably play only in special parts, like Mr. Sothorn, with whose peculiar turn of talent he has a great deal in common.

Mr. Sothorn has had much to do with the new movement, which insists upon society being represented on the stage. But, curiously enough, he began, as we have seen, with a caricature; and his subsequent impersonations, of a quieter nature, were, after all, not more like gentlemen of the world than similar characters had been previously made by Mr. Charles Ma-

thews, and a few—not very many, it must be confessed—of his school. But there was a cry that gentlemen—that is to say, persons who could play gentlemen—were scarce upon the stage, and Mr. Sothern, apart always from Lord Dundreary, was recognized as one who could, as far as himself was concerned, supply the deficiency. Here is a man, said the public, who lives in good society and can depict its manners without going out of his way. Mr. Sothern, like others on the stage fulfilling the same conditions, was of course able to do this; but, somehow, this actor's most 'gentleman-like' characters have not been the most successful. The public always return to their first loves, and when they cannot get Lord Dundreary, they are likely to prefer 'Brother Sam' to the actor's less broad creations. The verdict is a little unfair to Mr. Sothern, who would perhaps have made a better stand had his introduction taken place in a non-sensational character. But the 'gentlemanly interest' is strong in its demands upon the stage. There are a large class, in fact, who want plays acted by gentlemen for gentlemen—as one might suppose, a dramatic version of the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' accepting that journal's own account of itself; and much the same requirement is made in the case of ladies, as regards manners and appearance, though beauty and talent are of course republican institutions with the sex, and are independent of conventional distinctions. The consequence is a new qualification for an engagement at a theatre—that the candidate should not be an actor.

It is not to be supposed that a man who is not an actor must necessarily be a gentleman; but it must be said for the amateur element on the stage that it is principally represented by persons who, without the help of their adopted profession, have a right to be so ranked. And their influence upon the drama has certainly been beneficial, not only in their own persons, but on account of a certain standard of taste which they establish and maintain.

There are men among the regular professionals who are just as good gentlemen in every sense of the term; but they are apt to be spoiled by the traditions of stage business, and to do less justice to themselves than they would had they made their start at the present time. On the other hand, the volunteers—as we may call them in contradistinction to the regulars—are not always sufficiently strong meat for the demands of a good play—a play with a healthy appetite for vigorous acting. Their performance is frequently pale as their cheeks would be without the rouge, and the hare's foot is an institution that cannot yet be dispensed with at a theatre, either in its figurative or its literal sense. But as such men get matured they make efficient actors in every acceptance of the term, and exercise, as has been said, a decidedly beneficial influence upon the stage. Of the ladies I must speak with reserve. In the theatre, as in the world, there are ladies and ladies; but the boards were never wanting in grace and beauty, and the presence of women who ought to have been duchesses and countesses by natural right, as so many indeed have become by right of their husbands. And who would dare to say that they are not represented in the present day? There is no want of actresses of the present generation who are able to portray the manners of society of a very different kind from that depicted in 'Formosa.' And with regard to the much-discussed merits of this piece, I may here remark that it is one which ought not to have been either written or produced. It holds the mirror up to a certain kind of nature that ought not to be, and with a great deal of distortion into the bargain. Supposing the delineation to be thoroughly accurate, it still does not follow that because certain evils exist they are fitted for representation on the stage. People go to the theatre, after all, for amusement rather than instruction, and where instruction is given it should be instruction of a beneficial kind. 'Formosa' is calculated to instruct people in some things that they

ought not to know; and in the case of those who *do* know them, there is an obvious objection to such subjects being made matters for diversion. You might with equal propriety convert physical diseases as moral diseases to dramatic use; and who would like to make merry over a vivid representation of a case of small-pox or scarlet fever, to say nothing of the sensation incidents of epilepsy?

A question arising out of the influx of the volunteer element upon the stage was recently discussed in a weekly journal—I mean the position of the actor in social life. The negro's place in nature has afforded occasion for considerable difference of opinion among scientific men, but, compared with the actor's place in society, it would be facile of solution. Hitherto people have not troubled themselves much upon the subject. Most of us have been content to consider the actor as we consider the members of other callings. Supposing that we had no objection to the profession upon conscientious grounds—and some people really have even in these enlightened days—we would associate with him if he complied with the usual conditions which make a man a gentleman, and if he did not we would have as little to do with him as possible, or decline the honour of his acquaintance altogether. But in these days something more, it seems, is demanded. When we meet an actor it is impossible to say who he may happen to be. He may be a disguised duke, a mute inglorious marquis, a retired viscount, a baron who does not wish the fact to be generally known, and the chances are, at any rate, that he is a man of good family with a university training, a position in a county, and perhaps a rank derived from a commission in the Guards. Such men require a different recognition from society than that which is generally accorded to the profession, and complain that they are looked down

upon because they are on the stage. I do not believe anything of the kind. Some people of rank—who are *only* people of rank—may sneer at them for their connection with the stage, just as they would sneer at them for taking to any other pursuit that has the vulgar look of being a means to 'get a living.' But our volunteers should despise demonstrations of the kind. The people best worth knowing, of any rank, will not make such fools of themselves. Moreover, let them remember what Alfred Tennyson says—

'An artist, sir, should rest in Art,
And waive a little of his claim—
To have the deep poetic heart
Is more than all poetic fame.'

And the deep dramatic heart, I suppose, is equally worthy of respect. Moreover, our volunteers should remember that they *are* volunteers—that they have gone into the profession of their own free will and keep some other men out of it. As regards social status, therefore, they have no right to dictate, but should take their chance with the rest of their class.

It is rather amusing to see, from a complaint in a daily paper, that the amateur mania has extended to the supers. The regulars, it seems, even in their humble line, are being superseded by volunteers, who are taking their places in the pantomimes and actually perform for nothing. How about *their* social status? I should like to be informed upon the point. It is sad to hear of this supercession, for which the managers are the persons to blame; but otherwise the volunteer movement in connection with the drama has certainly done good; and, apart from absurd exaggerations of realism—especially when extended to unnecessary accessories in the way of material—there is a better approach in the present day than there has ever been before to the proper representation of Society on the Stage.

S. L. B.



FROM SAINT LUKE'S HEAD TO THE CAT.

IT is the busiest, the noisiest, the most hardworking and practical, and, with one or two exceptions, the most unsavoury street in all London. It is a narrow street—pavements, roadway, and all, would scarce measure twenty feet. It is not a long street. From top to bottom and on either side the numbers on the houses fall short of a hundred and eighty. At one end of this street, which is Whitecross Street, the head of Saint Luke stands sentry; at the other end the Cat constantly guards the corner.

On a Saturday night the street in question is impassable to all save those whose business carries them there. The said business is 'marketing,' the eking out of the wages of the work of the week just expired towards the support of that grand old institution of the English poor man, a comfortable Sunday's dinner, and in making such other domestic purchases as may be. Standing in the shadow of the gloomy old church on the opposite side of the way, Whitecross Street, after dark on a Saturday night, presents a strange spectacle. As far as the eye can reach, a dense mass of higgling haggling humanity blocks the pavement and chokes up the roadway, while the deafening din of a thousand leather-lunged hucksters, bellowing the price and prime quality of their goods, blends to make a sullen roar quickset with shrill and sudden exclamations that sound like cries of pain, while the glare of gas and the smoke and flame of naphtha lamps fill the atmosphere with a luminous sulphur-coloured haze that takes not kindly to the night clouds, but piles up above the narrow gut it was belched from and lingers there till midnight, when the roaring below ceases and the flames are extinguished, and by-and-by the clinging mist is dispersed by the keen winds that herald the morning.

It is when the glare is at its brightest, the roar at its fullest, that Saint Luke and the Cat are

most vigilant. The eyes of the former twinkle merrily in a score of gay gas-jets, and the many mouths of the saint, represented by the frequent doors of the establishment in which he dwells, hang ajar and on nimble leash in hungry expectation of fools to devour; while the Cat at the other end of the street licks her whiskers and purs deceitful promises of rich cordials and of cream of the valley, her claws, which her velvet paws conceal, all the time itching to scratch the hard earnings out of the pouches of the silly mice that venture within her reach.

Whitecross Street is, to all intents and purposes, a market-place, and its peculiarity is that it is made so entirely by costermongers and barrowmen. On a Saturday night, supposing that one preserved courage enough to push his way amongst the motley crowd, he would possibly overlook this peculiarity in the tremendous rave and hubbub that prevail; but at a comparatively quiet time—Monday morning, for instance—it is plainly apparent. It was Monday morning when I was there, and no longer ago than a month.

The tide of trade at that time was decidedly at slack, and yet the number of barrows amounted to no less than a hundred and fifty-four; stationary and drawn up in line to the curbing of the exceedingly narrow pavement. It would be difficult to enumerate the variety of articles for sale on these barrows. Every sort of greengrocery, of course, and a very large supply of fish—many tons of it, I should say—perfectly fresh and wholesome, and retailed at prices that, could they have witnessed, would have caused those domestic economists who write to the 'Times' to stare in amazement. As many perhaps as half the number of the barrows were devoted to the sale of edibles: the remainder, with the broad boards laid on them, served as repositories for anything and everything including tinware, and crockeryware, and

secondhand tools, and cheap millinery, and secondhand scraps and flinders of ribbons and feathers, and muslins, in which the fashionable females of the locality take delight: and men's hats as low as sixpence each, and women's boots quite new and generally at the disposal of Mr. Moses—good-looking articles, but undoubtedly awful rubbish, at two shillings and threepence the pair. Everything offered for sale in Poverty's market must be cheap, dirt cheap. Here is a piled-up heap of fancy brooms and brushes branded with the Queen's brand, and doubtless outcasts from some government office. These are going at a ridiculously low figure, as little as a halfpenny being asked for a by no means 'bald and impotent' scrubbing-brush, while serviceable long brooms fetched no more than twopence. Job lots of wall-papers for covering room-walls; splendid pictures at a shilling a pair, for their further decoration after they are covered. Knives and forks, handy bits of stuff for fowelling, doormats, secondhand coats and waistcoats, bits of carpet, copper-lids, haberdashery, savealls for candles, and a thousand other things.

The shops (with a mighty exception, to be presently mentioned) make no great show. In such a market-place it might be expected that butchers' shops would be numerous; but from St. Luke's Head to the Cat they only number thirteen. Of bakers' shops there are less by three. Pawnbroking is accounted a good trade in squalid regions, the fourpenny and sixpenny pawns telling up very handsomely. Whitecross Street contains but two pawnbrokers—however, legitimate establishments, that is to say, that fearlessly and lawfully hang out their triplet of golden spheres as a trade sign; but the number of unlicensed pawnbrokers abounding in that neighbourhood is alarming to think of. On either side, Whitecross Street is skirted by a complete network of courts and alleys (those to the right communicating with that most awful of London thoroughfares known as Golden Lane), and each

has at least one 'leaving-shop.' You may know the leaving-shop at a glance by the peculiar sort of goods they put in the windows and outside the doors for sale—the 'lots' as a rule being kept together just as they were brought for money to be advanced on them. And if space were here allowed me, I should much like to express at length my opinion of these places. In short, I don't believe that they are nearly so bad as they are painted; and when I spoke of their great number as something alarming to think of, I rather meant as regards the reckless non-recognition of the law by the leaving-shop keepers. Of this much I am certain, it is as wrong as wrong can be to suppose that a 'leaving-shop' is invariably merely another name for a systematic repository for stolen goods; and I don't care in the least what the police say to the contrary. The police very frequently affect to be authorities in matters of which they are quite ignorant. I don't mean to say that the 'leaving-shop' anywhere is a desirable institution, but practically its operations are as conducive to the convenience of its customers as the establishments of Mr. Attenborough. It is perhaps not generally known that it is only such goods as the legitimate pawnbroker rejects that are carried to the 'leaving-shop.' As a rule the regular pawnbroker will not negotiate a smaller loan than fourpence; if the security offered is worth less, he turns it away; but the leaving-shop keeper will lend as little as twopence. The regular pawnbroker will have nothing to do with pots and pans, or odd knives and forks, or a kettle or a fender, or any other of the more unwieldy and shabby household gods of the poverty-stricken; whereas the leaving-shop keeper will receive them and advance a loan on them with much cheerfulness. If the leaving-shop will not have them, the scratching of the wolf at the door being inexorable, they must be sold outright, and a considerable stride be at the same time made towards the workhouse.

To return, however, to Whitecross

Street and its shops. Besides the ten bakers, and the thirteen butchers, and the two pawnbrokers, there are five cookshops, six establishments (as airy and open as any public soup kitchen) for supplying their patrons with hot stewed eels and pea-soup, to be served in small yellow basins with iron spoons, and to be eaten standing either at the counter or on the pavement at the door. Then there are five shops that do a roaring trade in what in Whitecross Street is known as 'awful,' which term is probably a corruption of 'offal,' and applies to the heads, hearts, and livers of oxen and the feet and intestines of sheep. In most cases the cat's-meat business is included in the 'awful' category.

But there yet remains to be mentioned the shops that in Whitecross Street figure more prominently than any—the gin-shops and the beer-shops. I must confess that I am not far advanced in teetotal principles; but when I had reckoned up the full number of these dens abounding in that brief narrow street—when I had entered one and all of them, and taken note of their interiors—and when I came to reflect on the terrible quantity of poisonous, maddening liquor that in the ordinary way of business they must dispense, and the class of persons it was dispensed among, I think that I never felt more kindly disposed towards Sir Wilfrid Lawson, or so much regretted that his recent bill for the better regulation of the liquor traffic was shelved.

At the same time I was confirmed in my previously-expressed opinion that the noble band of which Sir Wilfrid is so worthy a leader did not make the most of the materials at his command; neither him nor his colleagues. Let any one who doubts this refer to the speeches that at the time were made in the House of Commons. Nothing new was brought before the great body of hon. members who were to be convinced of the necessity for public-house reform. The same old ground was gone over. It was related how much good barley was misused; how many thousands or

millions of gallons of gin and rum and brandy were swallowed annually in the three kingdoms, and how much per week and per diem this meant for each individual, and what *must* be the deplorable result of such monstrous indulgence in intoxicating stimulants. But how much more to the purpose would it have been had Sir Wilfrid Lawson clapped before the eyes of hon. members living pictures of the horrors it was his righteous purpose to mitigate—pictures photographed on the spot and only the day before?

With this object in view, he could not have done better than paid a visit, such as I did, to that wonderful narrow thoroughfare with Saint Luke's Head at one corner and the Cat at the other. He would have been enabled to tell his amazed audience that here was a street at the very core of London's busy heart hedged in on all sides by poverty and squalor, a street consisting of less than two hundred shops, of which *one in every ten* was either a gin-shop or a beer-shop. I like to be particular in these matters, and so will enumerate the signs by which these eighteen beer and gin-shops, in a length of seven hundred yards, are known:—St. Luke's Head, Crown, Britannia Tap, Spread Eagle, British Banner, Black Boy, British Queen, George, Brunton's, Horns, Warwick Arms, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Jamaica Stores, Two Brewers, Rum Punchon, The Yellow House, The Cherry Tree, and The Cat.

But, the reader may suggest, it should be borne in mind that Whitecross Street is a market-place, and that although at a time of slackness the number of these places may appear alarmingly great, at high tide of business it is probable that they no more than suffice to provide for the modest requirements of the multitude.

I, too, thought that probably this might be the case. To be sure, there was a general slackness in the street. The butcher-boys were scraping clean the ensanguined boards and chopping-blocks, while their master gossiped with his neighbours; the eel-shop man, having several hours of leisure before him, calmly smoked

his short pipe as he chopped parsley for flavouring the contents of the great pot. Business generally was 'dull,' probably the gin-shops and the beer-shops were so too. The only way to settle the question was to look in and see.

I did so, and am almost afraid to state the result of my 'looking in.' It was Monday morning, be it remembered, between twelve and one o'clock; a time when, in such a neighbourhood as this, idlers and workers might be supposed to be at home at dinner. Nevertheless, every gin-shop, every beer-house, was doing a thriving trade. Of the male drinkers I took no count; but it is a grim and terrible fact that within that length of seven hundred yards, at noon on a sunshiny day, *one hundred and forty-five women* were guzzling gin and beer as they clustered about those eighteen dingy, evil-smelling bars.

Many of the women had children with them, some big enough to clutch the pewter pot within their greedy, grimy little hands, and swig heartily at it; many so small that for the present they had to be content to fuddle at second hand as they huddled under the ragged shawl that the drunken slatterns wore slouched about their shoulders. Some were already so drunk that the barmen and maids were remonstrating with them because of their hoggish behaviour and refusing them another drop, even though—under stress of gin already imbibed—they sank down on their knees and begged it. Others were only half-mellow as yet, and made

the very walls ring with their boisterous mirth; but gossip was the order of the day—grouping together over porter pots and gin measures and chattering with the volubility of demented magpies. Here and there was discovered a group of three or four addicted to the manly habit of gambling as well as drinking, and were tossing up their halfpence and calling 'heads' or 'tails' in a manner edifying to behold.

In one dirty little beer-shop, in the vicinity of a place known as Bridgewater Gardens, not a man was to be seen, but *eighteen* women, ragged, squabbling, dirty wretches all of them, many with black eyes and cut faces, were swilling out of quart measures, while their babies sprawled in the sawdust and made toys of the spittoons.

At another house there was a gang of drunken women at a bar, and, all in sight of the other customers, one of them—she was drunk—proceeded to divest herself of her decent-looking gown, which she handed, rolled up, to a companion, who hurried off with it—to where if not to the pawnshop?

Only that I am unwilling to incur a charge of 'piling up the agony,' I could give the reader twenty such pictures. In Whitecross Street, however, they are constantly on view; and I sincerely hope that the next time the subject of drinking and drinking-shops is brought before Parliament some humane and courageous member will go there and report to honourable gentlemen assembled what he saw.

J. G.



WYBROWE'S WILL.

An Odd Story.

By 'Rux.'

I.

A DEFERENTIAL tap at the outer door; then the heavy portière slid noiselessly aside; and then the low-pitched voice of my man Ward woke me from my curaçoe-and-cavendish-begotten morning dream. It *was* annoying. The Cupid-and-Psyche clock on the mantelpiece had just struck one; it was a divinely-tempered English July day; the rough macadam (so dear to the souls of King, and Kesterton, and the rest of the fraternity, and so dear to the pockets of their patrons) had been ground smooth by the *fervida rota* of the broughams and barouches of a bloated aristocracy, and, in Bruton Street at least, vexed my soul and jarred my nerves no longer. I had made an admirable knife-and-fork breakfast; had disposed of my usual pile of letters from men, women, and creditors; had carefully filled and carefully lighted the big, black brûle-gueule; had yielded myself with a lazy sigh to the soft embraces of my pet lounging-chair drawn up close to the open window where the sun-shades flapped languidly over miniature hanging gardens—I had done all this, and, oblivious for a while of debts and duns and entanglements, was falling fast into a blissful trance, like a Celestial in a state of bhang, when—

'Please, sir,' said Ward, drawing back the portière. Brought back to sublunary matters thus, I looked at him reproachfully.

'I thought I told you——' I murmured.

'Yes, sir—I know!' he responded, anxious to vindicate my confidence in him; 'you wasn't to be disturbed. More I shouldn't have, sir; only—it's my lady! It was no good trying to stop her. And she's coming up.'

Now 'my lady' meant Lady Medusa Crusingham, my aunt; and, as Ward said, it *was* no good trying to stop her.

I drew the amber mouthpiece of the big, black brûle-gueule slowly from between reluctant lips; laid down the half-smoked pipe with a covetous sigh, and a faintly muted strong ejaculation; and resigned myself to my fate.

The portière slid aside once more; and Aunt Medusa pranced through the opening straight down upon me, with a more determined expression than usual upon her aristocratic face.

Ward made a rapid exit; and the outer door closed behind him.

'My dear aunt!' I drawled, picking myself up languidly, and moving a step or two to meet my infliction.

'Frank!' said Aunt Medusa, with ominous abruptness, 'sit down again. I've something to say to you.'

She folded herself, as it were,—Aunt Medusa never seemed to sit down like ordinary humanity; she was very lean and abnormally long; and, I fancied, had a hinge somewhere about the middle of her, and nowhere else—into a straight, knotty-backed, mediæval chair that formed a portion of my *bric-à-brac*, and that, regarded as a resting-place, invariably made me shudder; folded her long thorough-bred *gris-perle* gloved hands; and held me with her glittering eye.

I felt I was likely to be in for a *mauvais quart d'heure*. The charges that might be brought against me were so manifold, that I only speculated, in that moment's breathing-time I got, which particular one I was to be called to plead to on this occasion.

I thought of that neatly red-taped and docketed sheaf of bills in the bottom drawer of my davenport, all impartially unpaid; of my losses on 'The Robber' last month at Ascot; of my subsequent (and consequent) transactions with Mr. Nepthali of Jermyn Street; of my harmless (but expensive) flirtation with Mdlle

Aurélie, *belle-du-ballet*; of my more dangerous (and more expensive) affairs with Kate Tyrrell of the Queen's Theatre Royal, and Mrs. Montessor of London, Paris, and the Bads generally; and I was rather curious to know where Aunt Medusa was going to break ground; for that high-actioned, high-nosed, high-tempered relative of mine, with all three peculiarities more strongly marked than ever, was obviously about to come down on me for something.

She had bought and paid for me (on the whole, rather dearly I should say) years ago—when I was a younger son at Eton, with an amiable proclivity for coming to every species of grief; and furnished me with the means of decent subsistence at Oxford—I need hardly say, with the bland co-operation of the long-suffering tradesmen of that pleasant place; and, since, had opened such a credit for me with Coutts's as, with a good deal more of similar co-operation, enabled me to make a fair show in the flesh in London and like Pandemonia. Moreover, as she had quarrelled hopelessly with the Governor, and hated my elder brother Earls court, Captain of Horse Guards, rather more viciously, if possible, than that amiable personage hated her, I had every reason to expect that I should come in for all she had to leave by-and-by—an expectation which I don't doubt was shared by Mr. Nepthali, and others of his calling and persuasion, and would account for the tenderness they had hitherto shown in the plucking of their pigeon.

So that, you see, Aunt Medusa had acquired the right of bullying me to any extent, and had been by no means slow to exercise it. Only, she had been usually wont to send for me to Park Lane when she wanted to do it. What could have brought her to Bruton Street at this undue hour, this morning?

'Lucky Katie hadn't happened to drop in to lunch to-day!' I mentally ejaculated—'Katie' meant Miss Tyrrell, who would sometimes honour me with a morning call after an early rehearsal—or Charlie

Twistleton and his bull-pup. I don't know which would have been the worse. Well, Aunt Medusa, I went on aloud, for I was getting rather nervous under the prolonged gaze of the dowager's glittering eye, 'and what have you to say to me?'

Here I glanced ruefully at the *brûle-gueule* on the little table at my elbow, thinking I could have stood what was coming better if I could have had it between my lips again.

'Just this, Frank,' said Lady Medusa; 'I saw, like every one else, the way you were going on last night with that horrible woman.'

I knew what my crime was then—Annie Montessor.

'What horrible woman?' I asked innocently; 'and how did I go on?'

'You know what I mean. That Mrs. Montessor. Montessor, indeed!' snorted Aunt Medusa, in indignant parenthesis; 'her name's no more Montessor than mine is, I'll be bound.'

'So I've heard,' I responded meekly; 'but if she likes to call herself so, why—and her Grace of Fitz-Fulke has taken her up this season, you know.'

Now her Grace of Fitz-Fulke is one of the leaders of the Elect; with power to bind and loose, and make and mar; a very incarnation of Propriety; to be taken up of whom is to gain the meed of virtue, without necessarily (as was perhaps the case with Annie Montessor) undergoing the martyrdom thereof.

'The Duchess is a fool!' snapped my uncompromising relative sharply; forgetting, as I fondly hoped, her wrath against me in her wrath at the cogency of my arguments; 'the Duchess is a fool! This Mrs. Montessor'—indignant snort again—'this Mrs. Montessor has completely got over her by going to hear Mrs. Burthwaite preach at the Pantechnicon every Sunday; and that sort of thing.'

'Well, she deserves something for that!' I ventured to suggest; 'it must be decidedly the reverse of festive; and—'

But Aunt Medusa wasn't to be turned from her point. She had come to Bruton Street to hold forth

to me on the heinous nature of my flirtation with the dangerous Circe that every woman in London envied, and hated, and said spiteful things about; and she did it.

'The long and short of it is, Frank,' Aunt Medusa said, by way of general conclusion, opening and shutting her under-jaw like a steel-trap between each word, and nodding her head at me emphatically—'the long and the short of it is, that you must marry. And the sooner the better. There!'

I wasn't certainly prepared for this heroic remedy; but I managed to make answer with tolerable composure.

'Well, yes; I suppose I must when the right woman asks me. But that hasn't happened to me yet; so——'

'Fiddlestick!' ejaculated Lady Medusa. 'You'll be good enough to do as you're bid. I mean you to be married before Christmas!'

There was no question that she looked as if she meant it, at any rate. The situation was becoming rather alarming.

'Who is she?' I asked, submissively.

'She is very nice, Frank,' Aunt Medusa said, propitiated; 'but I shan't tell you who she is till you've seen her. What are you going to do this afternoon?'

I had intended to spend most of it in Annie Montessor's boudoir; so I said—

'Going to hear Wigan at Apsley House, I think.'

'Oh!' said Aunt Medusa; 'well; then you had better come down to Mrs. Leo Huntingdon's garden-party at Fulham afterwards. I have a card for you.'

'Very well,' I assented. And then, as a thought struck me—'Is she to be there?'

'Perhaps!' replied Lady Medusa, rising all of a piece upon her hinge, and preparing to depart. 'Don't be later than four, mind. No; you can't see me downstairs in that dress!'—as I dutifully moved towards the door with her—'Ward will open the door for me. Good-bye!'

And my aunt was gone.

I fell to smoking again, speculating who my Fate was to be. I had no thought of avoiding it. It was less trouble to be married than to combat a resolution of Aunt Medusa's; and I am, naturally, the laziest man of my acquaintance. Moreover, I couldn't afford to quarrel with her, even if I had had the energy. I concluded, as Artemus says, 'to let things slide.'

Presently, enter without any further warning than a tattoo with her parasol-handle on the door-panel Kate Tyrrell of the Queen's, just come from rehearsal.

'Give me something to eat, Frank,' Miss Tyrrell says, with rather unflattering abruptness, 'I'm famished! That wretched Mallaby called the new piece at ten; and I've been at it ever since. What's this? Pâté d'Amiens? I like that. And truffled ham. And strawberries. Is there any cream? Yes. And maraschino jelly. And Vienna rusks. I shall do capitally! Will I have tea or coffee? Neither, thank you *très-cher*. Perhaps you will give me some hock and Nassau seltzer—I'm dying of thirst.'

Ward brought the beverage she wanted, and retired. Miss Tyrrell ate her luncheon without troubling herself much to talk to me till she got to the strawberries and cream; between the spoonfuls of a huge plateful of which she told me all about Lifter's new and (in the French, at all events) original piece they were studying at the theatre; at least all about her own part in it; and how Lifter had complimented her; and how jealous the other women were of her; and what dresses she was to wear; and so forth.

When the strawberries were all gone, and the cream-ewer was empty, and she had dipped her pretty little fingers in eau de Cologne and water, and I had dried them for her, Miss Tyrrell helped herself to a cigarette from the box on the mantelpiece, lit it scientifically at the taper perennially burning there, rolled a low chair up to the window opposite mine, deposited herself therein, crossed her pretty ankles *à mon intention* on

the footstool, and blew little blue clouds of Pheresli tobacco all about her.

'You look awfully bored, I think, Frank,' she observed, for the first time at leisure to contemplate my physiognomy; 'what's been teasing you?'

'Nothing, *mon enfant*,' I responded. 'Aunt Medusa has been here, that's all. That tells on a man at this time of day, you know.'

'And what has Aunt Medusa been doing to you?'

'Nothing. At least, nothing to what she's going to do!'

Miss Tyrrell interrogated me with a pretty movement of her admirably pencilled eyebrows.

'She's going to marry me, Katie!' I replied.

'She can't!' responded Katie, briskly. I fancy Miss Tyrrell didn't like the notion of matrimony in my case, except on one slightly improbable condition.

'She can't! It's against the law, you know!'

'I mean, she's going to marry me to some one.'

'Who?'

'I don't know.'

Miss Tyrrell raised her eyebrows again, and puffed at her cigarette.

'And you mean to let her, Frank?' she said, presently.

'How can I help it? If she says I am to marry, I must, you know.'

'Ridiculous!'

'Perhaps so; but unavoidable.'

She raised her shoulders this time.

'Where are you going this afternoon?'

'Garden party at Fulham,' I replied.

'Where you'll be bored to death. Come down and dine with us at Richmond. Colocynth makes up a party. That will be much better for you, Frank.'

'And for you too, *ma belle*,' I thought, understanding the manoeuvre.

'Can't,' I said; determining that if I broke faith with Aunt Medusa it should be to go to Mrs. Montessor's, who I knew wouldn't be at Mrs. Huntingdon's.

'Nonsense!' Miss Tyrrell said,

imperiously. And then coaxingly, 'Do, Frank. It's the last night I shall have free. They're going to bring out the new piece to-morrow.'

But I was proof against this Circe for the nonce; and finally, Circe having had her luncheon, and finished her cigarette, grew piqued, and got up.

'You won't come, then?'

'Couldn't. I promised Aunt Medusa.'

'Bah! She's to be at Fulham, I suppose—*la future*!'

'I shouldn't wonder.'

'And you really mean to—'

'To do as I'm told? I believe so.'

'I've no patience with you!' she said, fairly savage; 'you've no more will of your own than a child!'

'Never had,' I responded. 'If I had, I should go with you to Richmond. As it is, Aunt Medusa decides for me; and I'm going to Fulham.'

'Bon voyage, alors!' she answered, moving away towards the door. When her hand was on the handle she stopped, finding I hadn't risen to stop her.

'Good-bye, Frank! I must go.'

'Good-bye, my child,' I returned, beginning to wish she would.

She came quietly across the room again, and stood beside my chair.

'It's awfully unkind of you,' she murmured, putting her warm little gloved hand into mine, and giving me the benefit of her dark eyes, 'Do come!'

But I held firm, and didn't. And Miss Tyrrell went away in dudgeon and a miniature brougham shortly afterwards.

Just as I had awoke to the consciousness that it was time to dress, Charlie Twistleton and his bull-pup came in.

The latter always evinced a deadly animosity to my person; and invariably flew at my legs whenever he caught sight of me: as he did on this occasion.

Practice, however, had made me perfect in my system of defence; and I kicked him dexterously back again to his admiring owner, who quieted him by the application of his own boot-heel.

'Good-plucked one, ain't he?' Charlie said. 'Deuced near nipped you, Frank. He'd better have something to eat. Ward, fetch me a bit of meat of some kind—raw, mind! Over which refreshment the bull-pup continued to growl at me at intervals.

'Going to this woman's at Fulham?' asked Twistleton, by-and-by.

'Supposed to be,' I said.

'Same here. I'll drive you down, if you like. Cut away and dress.'

I went and dressed; thinking that as the matter was thus decided for me I'd better go to Fulham, and not to Mrs. Montessoro's.

'We'll leave the pup here,' Charlie said, when I emerged from my bedroom. 'He'd be in the way, perhaps, in the trap. Ready? Come along.'

Charlie's cab was waiting below in Bruton Street. The next minute we were charging at his usual pace through Berkeley Square.

'I say,' said my Jehu, lolling his arms on the apron, and tranquilly indifferent to the fact that we had shaved by a ponderous coal-waggon with about an inch to spare. 'I say, Frank, I hope the deuce she's there! That's all I'm going for—to see her.'

'All I'm going for, too,' I muttered, thinking of my *future*; 'who do you mean, though?'

'Woman everybody's talking about, to be sure.'

'And who's she?'

'Who?' Charlie drawled, as we swung sharply round the corner into Piccadilly, and sent the stock in trade of the street stall-keeper into the middle of the road; 'who? Why, Mrs. Wybrowe, of course! Gad! we smashed something, didn't we?'

II.

'But who is Mrs. Wybrowe? And why is everybody talking about her?' I persisted.

'Longish story,' Charlie responded; 'romantic, and that. However, old Upas told me all about it last night; and here it is.'

And this, briefly, and divested of Twistleton's peculiar diction, was the story.

Wybrowe, Brazilian millionaire,

about seventy, or thereabouts, marries Helen Chetwynd, inpecunious belle, about nineteen, daughter of a British diplomat in those parts; and, after two years of connubial felicity, considerably dies. Wybrowe is jealous as a Spaniard; and his jealousy looks beyond his own life. So he leaves a terrible will behind him. This cunningly contrived document provides: that his widow, then just twenty-one, shall receive and enjoy an income of some 15,000*l.* per annum so long—and only so long—as she shall remain unmarried. That if she do marry again, she shall receive absolutely nothing—the entire estate of the deceased passing to two distant relatives, believed to be living in obscure poverty in London.

Now comes the most curious part of the story.

A good many men besides old Wybrowe went mad about la belle Héléne out in Brazil; notably a man who was thought to be nearly as big a Croesus—a half-Spaniard, half-Englishman, by name Alvarez Smith. This hybrid was said to have the temper of a fiend, the face of a baboon, and the complexion of a jaundice-patient. The frantic vehemence with which, when at last he did speak, Smith pleaded his cause to her, nearly frightened Miss Chetwynd into hysterics: the malignant black scowl that twisted his ugly face till it grew absolutely awful in its hideousness, when she unconditionally declined his proposals, and shrank away from him, haunted her sleep for many a night afterwards.

Alvarez Smith went away and thought out his vengeance. This is how he took it, after waiting patiently for three years.

During old Wybrowe's lifetime he kept quiet, and made no sign. When the old man was dead, Smith broke in upon the widow, and, with full knowledge of the provisions of Wybrowe's will, renewed his former propositions. They were rejected again—this time with the addition of certain words that Helen Wybrowe would have been more prudent not to have spoken to such a man.

The same steamer which brought the widow home to England had among its passengers Alvarez Smith. He never once spoke to her, or molested her in any way during the voyage; but his hungry black eyes would rest upon her in a way that frightened her in spite of herself.

Those eyes watched her into the railway carriage at Southampton; met hers as she got out on to the platform at Waterloo; and, again, as the doors of her sister's house in Park Lane closed upon her. Every time she went abroad she met them; sleeping and waking, Alvarez Smith haunted her. It was intolerable; but what could she do? She left town; he followed her. She shut herself up in the house for days; and the first person she saw, when, by day or by night, she came out again was—Smith; always Alvarez Smith. Mrs. Wybrowe grew nervous and ill under this implacable persecution, which it was impossible to put an end to. And the worst of it was that she felt her persecutor was gaining a certain power over her; that those terrible eyes of his fascinated her like a basilisk's. She never avowed this feeling to Lady Oswestry, her sister, but she couldn't help confessing it to herself.

In a few weeks after her arrival in London, old Wybrowe's lawyer communicated to her the following startling intelligence. A person had bought up the reversionary interest of her husband's two distant relatives in the income that had been left her, subject to her remaining unmarried. Wybrowe's kinsmen, too poor to be troubled with many scruples, and considering that it was barely likely a woman would give up 15,000*l.* a year when she could keep it on such easy terms, had greedily accepted the offer that had been made them; had accordingly executed the necessary legal documents; had received a stipulated sum down; and had emigrated to Australia.

The person who had thus bought them out was, consequently, the person who would claim the heavy forfeit from Helen Wybrowe in the event of her marrying again. And

it was hardly needful to tell her that person's name. She guessed it instinctively—Alvarez Smith.

This, then, was her position: she must either, at one-and-twenty, condemn herself to a life-long widowhood, or relinquish a magnificent income to the man she detested. True, a court of law *might*, as her lawyer told her, set the will aside; but how could a woman petition such a court? Her woman's delicacy, at all events, rendered that out of the question in her case. Again, there might be men who would think (and who could afford to think) lightly of marrying a beggar; and among them there might be one whom she could love. But, wise in her generation, Mrs. Wybrowe built no castles in the air of this sort. She accepted the situation *telle qu'elle était*; shut herself up no longer; went among her kind; encountered her basilisk with an impassible visage; and tortured her tormentor by an ingeniously arranged sequence of flirtations with passed masters of the art.

Such, in substance, was Charlie Twistleton's story, which, interspersed with his own comments, lasted all the way down to Fulham.

I felt curious—strangely eager—to see this woman; from all I had just heard about her, I fancied she must needs stand apart from her kind in some way. And I had had five years of penal servitude with apparently homogeneous London women; whose manners and customs, and ideas seemed, like their dresses, to be all cut out of the same piece, and fashioned on the same model. What would Helen Wybrowe be like? It was my pet name, too—Helen.

'See her?' I asked Twistleton when we had done koo-loo to Mrs. Huntingdon, and got out on to the croquet-lawn. With his pebble stuck in his eye, Charlie was raking the groups round us—vainly, as it seemed.

'No!' he said, 'she ain't here. Let's go and draw the shrubberies.'

'Frank!' said Aunt Medusa's voice behind me, just as I was moving off; 'Frank, let me introduce you to Miss Boodle?'

Brought up short like this, there was nothing for it but to stop and turn.

I turned. There was Miss Boodle, a plump, goodnatured-looking girl, apparently very appropriately named. 'This is the person you will be good enough to marry, sir,' Lady Medusa's eyes said to me as I lifted my hat; and Miss Boodle blushed a little, and smiled a good deal, as though she quite understood, and rather liked it.

But I made up my mind—with wonderful celerity, considering the little practice I had had in performing the feat of late—that Miss Boodle should never call herself the Hon. Mrs. Francis Drasdyl, unless at least, Helen Wybrowe should prove to be—

'Frank will take you to the lower lawn, Bella,' Aunt Medusa said, breaking in sharply upon me, and folding herself into a garden-chair as she spoke; 'I think the sets seem all made up here.'

And Bella and I moved away. I looked at her as I strolled down a gravel walk beside her.

No; it was impossible. That round face and figure would be simply Lambertesque in another ten years; in anticipation of which, probably, nature had beneficently provided Miss Boodle with, as it were, web-feet; and the hands matched the feet. No; it really could not be done, unless indeed—

'You play croquet, Mr. Drasdyl?' Miss Boodle asked. Not a bad voice; but, somehow, not the voice I (rather hard to satisfy in that particular) fancied could ever thrill me much.

'Do you?' I returned, prudently. 'Oh! I doat on it,' Miss Bella cried, with a healthy enthusiasm I couldn't but admire. She was a young woman from the country, and this was her first season. Her what I must call Boodledom was fresh upon her still; like the Kentish roses on her round, plump cheeks.

'Do you know,' she went on, 'I won the champion mallet at our club last year!'

'Did you?' I said, gravely; 'I'm so sorry, Miss Boodle.'

'Dear me, Mr. Drasdyl! Why?'

'Because I shan't dare offer myself as a partner to a champion. I'm a shocking muff at this sort of thing.'

'Never mind!' she returned, with charming *naïveté*. 'I'm going to play with Cousin Tom!'

I invoked a fervent blessing on that individual wherever he was.

'And Cousin Tom is a champion, too?'

'Oh! yes. He plays so well.' And Miss Boodle's eyes went roving about in every direction in search of her partner.

'There he is!' she cried at last, half bounding forward. There he was, unmistakably. A broad-shouldered, freckled-faced, orange-whiskered youth, perspiring with eagerness for the fray, must be Cousin Tom, of course.

'Mr. Claypool—Mr. Drasdyl,' said Miss Boodle, performing a most uncalled-for and absurd ceremony for my sole benefit apparently, the champion being totally unconscious of my existence, and intent only on getting to work with the shortest possible delay.

'You couldn't be in better hands, I see, Miss Boodle,' I said, as I lifted my hat to her, and lounged off. I kept away from the upper lawn, where Aunt Medusa was, and turned into the river-walk, where a score or so of flirtations were progressing more or less satisfactorily, with a firmer resolve than ever that never, at any price, would I take Isabella Boodle to wife.

I strolled along without meeting any one I knew, and was just going to sit down under a tree in a secluded corner and perpetrate a weed, when the voice of some one, hidden yet by the turn in the path—the divinest woman's voice that ever fell on a man's ear out of Paradise, fell on mine.

My slow, languid pulse, that nothing ever quickened, quickened then. I stood still, drinking in the sound. Two women came round the bend, towards me. One I knew—Lady Oswestry. The other I fancied I had seen before—in my dreams.

They were talking so earnestly

that neither saw me till they were quite close. Then Lady Oswestry looked up. 'Ah! Mr. Drasdyl.' And we exchanged hand-pressures and commonplace. Then she said, deliciously—

'Let me introduce you to my sister—Mrs. Wybrowe. Helen, Mr. Drasdyl.'

Mrs. Wybrowe's heavy violet eyes turned, slowly, full upon me; and I stood face to face with my Fate.

III.

I knew it, in that moment when our eyes met. I knew that I, Francis Drasdyl, world-worn, case-hardened, pococorante cynic of seven-and-twenty, was to love this woman; that I did love her already.

Rather tall, graceful as Diana in her statuesque summer draperies, a

'Helen of the low-arch'd brow,
And amber hair, and dewy violet eyes;'

a woman with a child's face, stamped before its time with the mark of passion or of pain, a little thinner and a little paler than it should have been, perhaps, but with all the stronger, subtler, attraction for me that it was so—this was Mrs. Wybrowe, as I saw her that day.

Sitting alone, in early wintry gloamings, over my solitary fire in Bruton Street, I had seen her, or one like her, in the dreams, begotten half of soul-weariness half of cavendish, which the hardest of us dream now and then—the woman I could love, the woman who should love me as I would be loved. Now I saw her face to face, my dream incarnate, the Fate I had longed for and yet dreaded. There she was, at last.

My Fate was speaking to me—half a dozen words—of-course; and I was drawling commonplace in answer; and then we were all three strolling on—I beside her.

If I had been blind I should have loved her for her voice—her voice that, with its weird, thrilling, ineffable sweetness, sent the blood with a long-forgotten shiver through my veins as I listened to it.

True, it spake only of the weather, and the De Murska, and the Season, and the last *cancan* about the latest Favourite, and other things in general. Set to such music, what did I care about the words?

Side by side with my Fate, oblivious of Aunt Medusa and Miss Boodle, I lounged down that pleasant, shady walk, enunciating decorous *vétilles* with languid voice and impassible mien; the same man, and yet how different from the man whom Lady Medusa and Kate Tyrrell had found in Bruton Street that morning.

For I loved this Helen Wybrowe, this woman with a strange history, whom I had known barely five minutes, as I had never loved woman before, as I never should again.

It was sudden enough, and absurd enough, in me, this *belle passion* that I felt. All the more reason for hiding it jealously.

We of this day, who make a science of *sang froid*, and, Sybarites though we be, shrink from ridicule—the ridicule of the fools we despise—as we never shrink from death—we learn to wear our mask easily enough, after a while. It was not till many a long day after that Helen Wybrowe really knew how it had been with me on the day we first met.

Down the pleasant shady walk, with the spell of her presence upon me, and the thrilling low music of her voice in my ear.

Presently we came to a little rond-point, where, under a big tree, there was a provision of garden-chairs. 'Shall we rest a little, Amy?' Mrs. Wybrowe said; 'it's too hot to keep walking.'

So we all three sat down under the big beech.

'You know Miss Boodle?' Lady Oswestry asked; 'I saw you playing *cavalier servente* on the croquet-lawn just now.'

'Of course one knows an heiress,' I responded, feeling pretty certain that Bella came under that denomination.

'Name, age, and what weight she carries,' murmured Helen; 'just as one knows all about the entries for the Grand Military.'

'Just so,' I returned; 'only not always so correctly. Wish one did. A "mistake" about *dot* is a much more serious business than standing a cracker on the wrong horse, you know.'

I thought if she wanted to talk stable I might as well help her; but she had turned her head a little, and was looking with dreamy eyes away from me.

Lady Oswestry took up the running.

'There's no "mistake" about Miss Boodle, I should think. Sir Boodle Boodle, you know—Kent people. He made a fortune by the new railway; and she's an only child, and there's no entail. Yes, Bella Boodle is decidedly a prize-match, Mr. Drasdy!'

'She *will* be, in a year or two,' I said, thinking of the Lambertesque symptoms I had noted in the damsel half an hour ago.

'Ah! you mean when her mother dies?' Lady Oswestry cried, agreeably misunderstanding me. 'Yes; she will probably have the Oxenham property too; I had forgotten that. But—two years? Lady Boodle is frightfully apoplectic, I *know*; Sir Savile Rowe told me so himself. I don't think it will be as long as that.'

'Don't you, really?' I sneered, gravely—not at her, but at myself—'don't you, really? That's important, Lady Oswestry.'

Helen's heavy violet eyes turned slowly back to my face again as I spoke. I hardened my heart, and met them tranquilly.

'And Sir Savile Rowe told you? Dear me! I went on.

'Yes,' Lady Oswestry nodded; 'this is *entre nous*, of course. However, I've no doubt Lady Medusa knows all about it: she and Lady Boodle are rather *liées*. By the way, what have you done with Bella?'

'What a question! As if I were her keeper.'

'Pourquoi pas?' Lady Oswestry was notorious for a certain match-making hobby, and was taking a canter on it just at present. 'Pourquoi pas? She is very nice—letting alone her heiress-ship. And—'

A gesture, which, being inter-

preted, meant, 'And you are nothing but a Detrimental—a pensioner of Aunt Medusa's, you know!' finished the sentence eloquently.

'And her passion for——' I was going on.

'Oh! *that's* quite out of the question!' Lady Oswestry interrupted, eagerly, whipping up her hobby: 'they will never allow that, never. Sir Boodle has a perfect horror of—'

'Of what? Croquet?'

'Croquet? How absurd! No; of cousins!'

'Has he?' I was getting rather mystified. 'Why?'

'He says they've no business to marry; at least, not *first* cousins, as they are.'

'Who are?'

'Bella and that young Claypool.'

'Oh! Cousin Tom?'

'Yes, Cousin Tom. No; *that* will never come to anything.'

'I should hope not,' I muttered, piously; 'but I didn't mean that, Lady Oswestry. It was Miss Boodle's passion for croquet that I was thinking of.'

'Dear me,' said Lady Oswestry, self-upbraidingly, 'how very ridiculous! I thought, of course, you knew——'

'I know nothing about it—about this *tendresse* for Cousin Tom.'

'Well, it doesn't matter: it's all nonsense, you know.'

'But I *don't* know. I might think so perhaps if I hadn't seen him; but I did, just now. And after what I saw, why——'

'Allons, donc!' she laughed. 'It's too bad of you to sneer at him. You know perfectly well——. Ah!' she broke off, suddenly, 'there's Gordon Murray! The very man I've been wanting to see all day.'

And Lady Oswestry made signals with her parasol to an individual in the distance, who perseveringly declined to see them.

'How stupid he is!' she cried, at last, provoked; 'he's actually moving away. I must catch him. I'll be back in a moment, Helen.'

And, heedless of my (not very strongly urged) offer to bring the recalcitrant Murray to her presence, Lady Oswestry set off in immediate

pursuit, turned a corner, and disappeared.

I don't remember what Helen and I talked about when we were left alone, or how long we sat under the big beech.

I know she spoke, and that every now and then the great violet eyes turned slowly upon me; and, when she was silent,

‘Filled with light
The interval of sound.’

Bref, I was in Elysium, and lost the count of time. A step, soft and cat-like, that neither of us heard, came down the walk. A dry branch cracked under the cautious tread, and then we both looked up. A man passed us. I knew him instinctively. The fierce black eyes, contracted in their wrath, which met mine in one brief, vindictive glare could only belong to one man.

That lithe, dark personage with the feline tread, and the ugly yellow physiognomy, must needs be the hero of Charlie Twistleton's story, the man who had bought up the arbitrament of Helen Wybrowe's fate—Alvarez Smith.

He never looked at her this time, only at me. I wonder whether the man's instinct told him, even then, that I loved her?

He went slowly by. I am not the least given to superstition, and even cavendish hasn't told much yet on my naturally strong nerves; but I perfectly understood, in that moment, the Italian theory of the *mal' occhia*, and the balmy summer air seemed purer when my enemy passed out of my sight.

For I felt that Alvarez Smith and I were foes, and mortal foes, from that hour; that a duel—it might be a duel to the death—had commenced between us. You laugh at this, perhaps, who read it, tranquilly sceptical of anything in the shape of melodrama in this age of realism.

Reading it, too, I might do the same; but, that day, I had heard and seen sufficient of Helen Wybrowe's rejected pretendant to be convinced that this was as absolutely a fact as that I drew breath.

Mrs. Wybrowe rose a little pale; the dark circle under her eyes more

plainly visible; a sort of *hunted* look upon her face that made my pulse throb angrily.

'Amy seems to have forgotten me,' she said; 'let us go and look for her.'

We walked across the croquet-lawn, for a while silently.

Then she said, 'You know that man who passed us just now?'

'I know him *now*,' I answered; 'I never saw him before, and only heard of his existence two hours ago.'

Her pale cheek flushed painfully.

'Then you have heard——?'

'Everything,' I answered, stopping her. 'There is Lady Oswestry yonder.'

So there was, with the unhappy Gordon Murray and Aunt Medusa.

Mrs. Wybrowe quickened her pace and said nothing more till she was safe under Amy Oswestry's wing again. Then a knot of men gathered round her, and Aunt Medusa bore down upon me and carried me away captive.

'Where is Bella, Frank?' she said.

'Eating strawberries and iced cream over there,' I answered, nodding towards the tent where the croquet-players were refreshing.

'Ah! and what do you think about her?'

'How *can* I think about her?' And in truth it did seem preposterous. Fancy a human intellect occupying itself about Bella Boodle!

Aunt Medusa hadn't the faintest notion of what I meant.

'She will be just the girl for——' she began.

'For Cousin Tom,' I interrupted. 'Yes; the two champions will pair admirably. She'll be Mrs. Thomas Claypool before the croquet season is over.'

I was longing to get back to that group round Mrs. Wybrowe from which Lady Medusa was bearing me away; and I dare say something of the impatience I felt manifested itself through the elaborate languor of my tone; and so my captor on a sudden conceived a wildly-vague notion that I was half inclined to be envious of Cousin Tom.

'There's no fear of that,' she said. 'You must go down to Kent for the September shooting. Lady Boodle

will send you a special invitation. I knew you would like Bella. And now take me to get an ice.'

She was positively hugging herself in the success of her little game!

I let her continue that exercise to her heart's content without any further attempt to demonstrate to her that it was by no means called for, and took her away, as I was bid, to get an ice.

She ate three large ones. Then Lady Boodle came up, and glared apoplectically at me through her double eyeglass when I was presented to her. Then she ate ices, which I had to fetch for her. When they had both tried their digestion sufficiently in this way, the two dowagers went off together to another tent to have five o'clock tea, and I was set at liberty.

The croquet-lawn was nearly deserted when I crossed it. Valse-music floating out into the still, sultry air through the open French windows of Mrs. Huntingdon's drawing-room explained this phenomenon. Near the doorway, with a fresh knot of men about her, stood Mrs. Wybrowe. Just as I entered, some man asked her for the valse they had just commenced. It was Gordon Murray, an admirable performer. I was near enough to hear her refusal; but, making as though I heard it not, proffered a similar request the next moment.

The same refusal was on her lips, when the angry blood rushed swiftly into her face; she bowed her head silently, and put her hand upon my arm. As I turned, I saw Alvarez Smith watching us. The next moment my arm was close about her and we were swinging round the valse circle. I quite understood to what I owed that valse: she had read a threat in her persecutor's eyes, and had rebelled against it.

Swiftly and smoothly, perfectly together in a flying Viennese step, we had taken a couple of turns before either of us had spoken a word. As we passed the place where I had seen Alvarez Smith standing the second time, her hand closed suddenly on mine, and I felt her shiver in my arms.

'You are tired. Shall we stop?'

'No, no!' she murmured. 'Don't stop. Keep on.'

And we kept on, till the 'Soldaten-lieder' came to an end.

'That fellow annoys you,' I said, as we whirled by him again. 'I believe he has the evil eye myself.'

'Don't talk of him!' And again I felt her shiver.

'If you bid me not—no. But it is intolerable, you know. And quite preventible. Why should you permit—'

'Hush!' And as she spoke she lifted her eyes, in that slow, languid fashion she had, up to mine.

'Hush! Don't let us speak or think of him now.'

There is something stronger than ice-water in the veins even of a cynic of seven-and-twenty, after all. A fire shot through mine at her delicious emphasis of the 'now.' Her head drooped towards my shoulder again, and she seemed to nestle like a tired bird in my arms, that, involuntarily, closed about her closer.

'What a valse this is!' she said, presently. 'I think no one has my step like you.'

'You will trust yourself to me again, then?'

'If you choose.'

No need to answer; we must have been sufficiently *en rapport* for her to read my thoughts easily enough. The valse ended, we went away into the conservatory to sit out the square dance that followed. We sat out a good many there.

The evil eye lit on us once or twice. I think we were both too happy to trouble ourselves much about that.

'Only this, dance, Amy,' Mrs. Wybrowe said, presently, when Lady Oswestry had unearthed us, and was proposing departure. And we had 'only that dance.'

I was wrapping her cloak about her in the hall.

'That rose will be dead before you get to Park Lane, Mrs. Wybrowe,' I said. 'Will you give it me to mark to-day with?'

It was the white rose she wore in her bosom that I asked for. She gave it me without a word. Then Lady Oswestry swept by us on some

man's arm to the carriage; we followed.

I held her hand in long, close farewell clasp; then the carriage-door was shut upon her; and Alvarez Smith and I were standing side by side on the gravel, watching her drive away.

IV.

The Season was over; London emptying fast; duns pressing; the heat intolerable. Howbeit I abode still in the Sahara of Bruton Street. Aunt Medusa had gone down into Kent with the Boodles, having extracted from me a promise to come down for the September shooting—a promise I only intended to keep if—

The 'if' was in Park Lane. Lady Oswestry had not yet made her move, hesitating between Buxton and Lindenbad; and I was watching the turn of the scale. For with Lady Oswestry would go Helen Wybrowe. And where Helen Wybrowe went I meant to follow. I had not spoken yet, though nearly a month had passed since that day at Fulham I had marked with a white rose. She had hardly given me a chance. And yet she knew, who knew me as I was, that I loved her—had loved her from the very moment our eyes met for the first time. And I knew my strange, wilful, passionate darling—my Helen, who was like no other—I knew she loved me with the one love of her life. Only between her loving me and my winning her there was much. Nevertheless the mask we both wore, before each other as before others, was getting too stifling to be worn much longer. It fell from both of us at last.

I had been sitting with her in Lady Oswestry's morning-room, under the shelter of the sunshades, among the flowers, one day for nearly an hour. My lady was heaven knows where; and we had been alone all the time. Common-places had languished, and died. There had been a silence, which those heavy violet eyes filled divinely enough, but which both of us knew must be broken; and only in one way.

I looked up into her face. In its passion-pallor, in the trembling lip, in the scarce-restrained tears that had gathered slowly to the eyes, I read what made me take her swiftly in my arms; and then the silence was broken by the sweet sound of her own name. 'Helen!'

She shivered, as she had shivered in that valse, only, this time, not with fear. And her head, with its diadem of amber hair, sank down upon my breast; and I bent mine till my lips touched hers, and clung to them. I had won her! Not yet.

The next moment she had freed herself.

'Oh! why have you done this?' she sobbed—wailed almost.

'Why? Because I love you, Helen. Because you love me. And because you and I know this is so.'

'Yes,' she murmured; 'yes; you love me. I know that. I knew it that day at Fulham. As no one ever has loved—ever will love me. I know that.'

'And you love me, Helen. You know that, too.'

'Yes; I love you!' she cried, passionately. 'I know that, too.'

'And yet you ask me—' I began, so far off my head as to be going to argue with her.

'Because this should never have been. All between us must end here, and now.'

'In heaven's name, why?' I broke in, rather mad with this piece of feminine cruelty. 'Why must it?'

'Frank,' she said, coolly now, 'Frank, this is folly. You know my story. You cannot marry a beggar as I shall be.'

'Nor you, à ce qu'il paraît.'

'Selfish and cruel!'

Even at that moment I couldn't but admire that truly feminine retort.

She went on.

'I? Am I thinking of myself? And yet this is my fault. I knew what has happened must happen. Yes; it is I who have been selfish. I knew it; and I ought—. But—oh! Frank, I knew you loved me; and my loveless life seemed so bitter—so bitter! And—'

And here she broke down, sobbing.

My wilful, passionate darling! She was trying to persuade herself that she was acting nobly and disinterestedly; and, being noways fitted for such self-martyrdom, was failing signally. She ought to have nipped this love of mine sharply in the bud, but lacked the will. And now she was trying to sacrifice it, and her own love, on the shrine of duty—now when she was my own, when she had rested her head upon my breast, when she had given her lips to mine.

Now, she had decided that I must not marry a beggar. And, she being inclined to martyrise herself, I must needs be selfish and cruel if I objected to share her crown. *Ma foi!* They think, these women, there is no such great difference, after all, between the sunlight and the moonlight, the water and the wine, our passions and theirs. If they can crucify a love, why not we?

And so my Helen—who was, indeed, my very own—told me I was not to marry a beggar; told me, that, for my sake, our love-story was to end here—in short, told me all a woman tells a man in like case.

But she told me, too, by every word and look, unwittingly but unmistakably, that I should be a triple fool if I lost her now—this be all and end-all of my life; this woman who would make my life worth the living. I didn't repeat my folly of attempting to argue with her. Her hand was strong enough against me as it was without such strengthening. I didn't take her in my arms again, and stifle her feeble special-pleading with kisses. I let her say her say. And then, when she had sunk back into the low deep fauteuil weak, and trembling, and defenceless again, I knelt beside her; and, holding fast in mine the little soft hand I never meant to let go. I told her how it must needs fare with me if she had her way. And I was conquering what I knew all along was my own of right; the violet eyes were full of happy tears; the words I looked to hear already trembling on the full lips that had grown meek again, when—there was a rustle of woman's draperies; and, through the *chia'oscuro* of the room,

Lady Oswestry bore down upon us.

And Helen rose; and, before I could stay her, had fled away swiftly upon her feet; leaving me to face my lady alone.

The which I did as best I might.

For a while Lady Oswestry looked grave and judicial; then, by degrees, benignant but mildly reproachful; when I took my leave, protective and honestly propitious. It was arranged between us that I should come to Park Lane early the next day.

At a frightfully undue hour I drove there. A hansom had just pulled up at the door; the late occupant was speaking to the groom of the chambers in the hall. I was just in time to hear the functionary's answer to the question put to him.

'No, sir. My lady and Mrs. Wybrowe left town for the Continent last evening.'

The other swung round on his heel with a fierce '*carajo!*' and again I stood face to face with Alvarez Smith, the man with the evil eye.

V.

That night, some twenty minutes past eight of the clock, my hansom, turning the Bruton Street corner at a sharp trot, was nearly cut over by another hansom charging furiously down Bond Street.

The two drivers exchanged a broadside of double-shotted blasphemies, flogged their horses clear of each other, and started again, the offending Jehu leading.

I was bound for Charing Cross, en route to Dover, Paris, and Lindenbad, in the track of Lady Oswestry and Helen Wybrowe; and, in consequence of this delay, only saved the 8.30 mail-train by about two seconds. Another man, however, ran it closer still. A man in a fur-lined travelling-robe, and a peaked cap pulled over his eyes, took a through ticket to Lindenbad after me, and followed me on to the platform, half a dozen yards behind.

I heard him hurrying after me; just as the guard had opened the door of an empty carriage, he

caught me up and got in too. The door was slammed; the whistle shrieked, and the Dover Mail started.

I had dropped into one corner; my companion rolled himself into the opposite one. I lit a cigar; so did he; and we had cleared London, and had run a dozen miles down the line before I looked at him again. I was thinking what Helen's sudden departure boded me; whether I was so sure of winning her, after all; and, deep in speculations of this sort, I had no eyes or thoughts for anything else.

Besides, that shapeless travelling-robe, and that peaked cap that kept his face in an impenetrable shadow, would have puzzled me, even if I had had a suspicion as to who the man in the opposite corner was. And in the preparations for my sudden departure I had forgotten all about him.

So that it was not till he tore off his cap and flung aside his wrapper that I knew that Alvarez Smith and I were alone together in that carriage of the Dover mail-train; and that he was glaring at me with all the furious hate he felt for me in his evil eyes.

I looked at him tranquilly enough, I think; but I couldn't help feeling that the rencontre was by no means an agreeable one; that the Express stopped nowhere between London and Dover; and that Alvarez Smith was probably as mad as any inmate of Hanwell.

However, I am not easily put off head, and, as I say, returned his glare with a tranquil stare, and went on smoking.

Whether he had expected his melodrama to produce more effect, and was disappointed; whether my calmness irritated him afresh, I don't know. Certain it is that he rose and came towards me with an oath.

It struck me forcibly that he was dangerous; and I gradually slipped my hand into the inner breast-pocket of my travelling-jacket, and unfastened the loop which kept a useful little revolver de poche steady there.

There seemed likely to be a neces-

sity, disagreeable but imperative, for shooting this man before we got to Dover. And it so happened that I felt in no humour to run any risk by the exercise of an unwise forbearance towards a mad brute like this, if it came to a fight.

It appeared, though, that he had something to say before he began; for he seated himself again exactly opposite to me, and muttered hoarsely:

'So, we are alone at last; you and I.'

'So it seems,' I returned. I saw that, if he meant to have a row, he didn't feel quite up to the mark yet, and wanted to *talk* himself into the necessary fury; so I thought I might venture to light another cigar; which I did, loosing my grip of the pistol-butt for a moment, but keeping an eye on my man the while.

He actually gnashed his yellow teeth at me. He looked so unutterably hideous, and at the same time so intensely ludicrous while he was doing it, that I laughed.

'Take care!' he screamed, shivering with wrath. 'You laugh now—let him laugh that wins! *Caramba* you have not won yet.'

'No?' I inquired, insolently.

'No! curse you! you never shall.'

'Bah! who says so, my good man?'

'I! I have sworn it!'

'You?' I sneered, rather enjoying his fury, and with no mind to spare him any stab I could give him. 'You? You are madder than I thought you were.'

'You shall never have her! *Madre de Dios!* never!'

'You're wrong. I shall.'

He smiled in a ghastly fashion with his white, dry lips.

'No,' he said; and if his tone was calmer, it was twice as 'dangerous' and threatening now. 'No; I shall keep my oath—be sure of that. Listen!' he went on, after a pause, and with that same forced calmness; 'from the day I saw her first, and each day more and more, I have loved her—this woman, who—'

'Who, from that same day, and

each day more and more, has loathed and hated you,' I struck in. 'Well?'

By the light of the lamp above us I could see his yellow face turn the ashen hue of a dead man's, as that cruel taunt of mine hit home.

He covered his face with his hands, and uttered a faint, dull moan, as though he had, in very deed, got his death-hurt.

Yes; and through those quivering fingers of his, tears, that must have been wrung from him like drops of blood in his agony, forced themselves slowly, one by one. He sat there, rocking himself to and fro, saying no word for a while, but making that low moan more than once.

Thinking this matter over since, I have learnt to pity this man. Thinking of my darling's worn face, and the hunted look he had brought there so often, I was pitiless enough then.

I smoked on, watching him. The Express rushed through the falling darkness; the stations flashed out one after another: we had run about half our distance.

Presently he spoke again, as though he had only just heard those last words of mine.

'Yes; she hates me—hates me, who would fling down my life,—lose my salvation for her!'

'I've no doubt. Unfortunately, neither sacrifice happens to be required. Have you anything else to observe?'

'She hates me,' he went on, as though he were talking to himself, and unheeding what I said: 'I could bear that, though it kills me. But to know another man can call her his—to know she loves this man! ah, no!'

I was beginning to get rather tired of the thing by this time, so I said—

'Don't you think we've had about enough of this? Quite, it seems to me. You've thrust yourself into a matter with which you have no earthly concern (beyond, of course, claiming your forfeit when Mrs. Wybrowe marries again—though whether a law-court will give it you, is, to say the least of it, doubtful), and, as you were rather

amusing, I listened to you; now, you bore me; let us drop the subject.'

'Not yet,' he said, with a strange sort of smile; 'you and I have something more to say to each other. Listen!—for I was going to interrupt him—you will give me your word of honour never to see Helen Wybrowe again. It will be better, believe me.'

'Damn your insolence!' I said, fairly angry at this; 'what do you mean?'

'Remember, you can never marry her; I have sworn it.'

'Bah! You mean you can beggar her? Try it.'

'I mean,' he said, more calmly than he had spoken yet—'I mean that sooner than you should marry Helen Wybrowe I would kill you.'

'Try that, too, if you like.'

'But you will promise me what I ask? You must. See; we are alone, you and I. You are in my power: nothing can save you if—'

He paused here, leaning forward towards me, with his elbows resting on his knees, and his evil eyes looking into mine. I smiled when he said nothing could save me from him; for I had considerable faith in the miniature six-shooter my right hand was closing on while he spoke.

'I knew you would follow her,' he went on. 'I saw you to-night at the station; I was behind you when you took your ticket; and I got in here after you, knowing that the hour I had longed for had come at last—when you and I should be alone, with none to stand between us; when you should swear to me never to see her face again; or when I should have your life.'

He ground the last three words out between his teeth with ferocious emphasis. The crisis was evidently approaching; the madman could hardly contain himself much longer. In another minute he might be at my throat; and then, disagreeable as it would be, I should inevitably have to shoot him. Alvarez Smith was by no means the sort of person to stand on much ceremony with when the instincts he inherited from that Spanish Creole of a mother of his were in the ascendant; and it

was his life or mine, I began to think. I drew the revolver quietly out of my pocket, and covered him from my knee in anticipation of his rush.

'Now,' he hissed, 'will you promise what I ask?'

'I'll see you in Gehenna first!'

'You will not?'

'Confound you, no! But I'll promise you this,' I added, as I saw him crouching like a jaguar for his spring at my throat, 'that, madman or no madman, if you lay a finger on me, I'll shoot you in your tracks without further warning.'

Raising my right hand quickly, I covered him fairly, now. My amiable companion dropped back into his seat with a hideous Spanish blasphemy; most unexpectedly baffled and beaten.

'That's right,' I said, considerably relieved to find he was not so mad as to have lost all fear for himself, and put me under the painful necessity of winging him; 'of course you didn't expect me to be so well able to take care of myself; and I suppose you've only a knife. I don't much think you'll kill me to-night, after all, though we are alone, &c., as you were good enough to remind me just now.'

'Oh!' he snarled, 'I shall kill you yet!'

'I differ with you there. My own impression is that you'll be in Hanwell or Charenton before long. Meanwhile, let me advise you not to try this again. If you do, remember, I've warned you.'

He flung a curse at me, and, turning away, rolled himself up in his cloak, and never moved again till the Mail ran into the Dover Station. Then he rose suddenly, opened the door, sprang on to the platform, and disappeared.

I had no time, then, to trouble about him. The train moved on to the pier, where the Calais packet lay. When I got on board I looked about carefully for my would-be assassin, intending, if I found him, to drop a hint to the first sergent-de-ville I came across on the other side. But Alvarez Smith didn't cross in the 'Sampshire' that night, I fancy. At least, his yellow face

was nowhere to be seen among the crowd at Calais, or at the Nord Station in Paris next morning. And I reached the 'Russie' at Lindenbad without encountering it.

VI.

'And so you ran away from me, Helen?'

It was some three or four hours after my arrival in Lindenbad. I had forced the consigne, carried Lady Oswestry's rooms in the 'Russie' by storm, utterly discomfiting the garrison by the suddenness and vigour of my assault, inasmuch that after a brief, hopeless struggle, it surrendered at discretion. My darling had spoken the words that bound her life to mine for ever. Under the summer stars, in the hush of the summer night, she and I were sitting on the balcony of their room that overlooked the river and the purple woods beyond; I at her feet, as I loved best to sit, and watch the great violet eyes turn slowly on me; at her feet, with her hand in mine again.

'And so you ran away from me, Helen?'

'What else could I do? I was so weak with you, Frank; so weak against my love. And, for your sake, I felt it ought not to be. So I ran away. It was terrible work to get Amy to start that night, though! She was horribly cruel to me: she fought for you. How I loved her when she did! But I would go; and so we went.'

'And then you thought you were safe?'

'Safer. Away from you, I was strong.'

'And did you think you would be out of my reach long?'

She gave me a smile, delicious as a caress. Then she said:

'Qui sait? I thought you would come, but not so soon. Not till I should have had time to harden my heart. I knew I was doing right, Frank. But I thought, too, that I might never see you again. And then——'

Her face told me the rest.

'Enfant! What had you to do with right or wrong if you loved

me? You were mine. How could you ever think I should let you go? Let you go, who have given me new faith, new hope, new life—made life precious to me, now—how could I? Helen, my Helen, nothing can take you from me now. You cannot take yourself from me.'

From my arms, where she had nestled, on a sudden she started.

'There!' she whispered, pointing to the deserted river-walk; 'there! Did you not see him?'

On her face, yet wet with happy tears, had come the hunted look once more; in her voice was the old fear, though my arms and my love were about her. I knew what had done this; the sight of a man for whom I was beginning to feel something of the hate that kills.

'Did you not see him?' she whispered again, shuddering even in my clasp.

'Whom?'

I knew what she would say before she said it.

'No,' I answered; 'I saw no one. Are you sure you recognized him?'

'Sure?' she repeated; 'I saw him plainly. He stood full in the moonlight against the background of the trees in the *allée*. And he lifted his hand as though it held a knife. It was a threat. Frank, that man would kill you.'

'Bah!'

'You don't know him.'

It struck me rather forcibly that I did.

'I tell you he would kill you.'

'Well, I dare say he would, if I let him. But life has grown too dear to me this last hour or two for me to let a madman rob me of it very easily. I shall take care of myself, *mon enfant*. Besides, I fancy you must be mistaken.'

'Impossible, I tell you.'

'I saw no one, you know. And if Alvarez Smith wants to do me a mischief, why on earth should he turn out and do melodrama in the moonlight—threaten with imaginary daggers, and that sort of thing—to put me on my guard?'

'I saw him standing there,' and she pointed, again, straight before her.

'And how was he dressed?'

'In a sort of cloak, it seemed. I saw him throw it back when he lifted his arm.'

'And then he disappeared—where?'

'In the shadow of the trees.'

That was perfectly possible. A couple of strides would take any one out of sight, who had stood even in the centre of the broad *allée*.

If Helen had really seen Alvarez Smith, he might be hidden in that shadow even now, watching us. My blood began to stir at this.

'Some perfectly inoffensive bourgeois, I should think,' I said, 'taking a pinch of snuff, or something of that sort. However, we'll see about Alvarez Smith in the morning. Lady Oswestry has woken up at last; we must come in, I suppose. Don't say anything to her about this notion of yours, mind.'

'Oh, Frank!' she murmured; 'take care. It was he I saw. And he hates you.'

'*Libre à lui!*' I responded, laughing. And then, on her lips, 'My darling, don't you think I shall take care for your sake, now? There! Sois tranquille, et dors sur les deux oreilles!' A piece of advice which I fancy Mrs. Wybrowe hardly followed as she ought to have done.

Whether it was Alvarez Smith whom she had seen, or not, and what that individual's presence in Lindenbad meant, I did not waste much time, as I sat smoking far into the dawn of the coming day at my open window, in considering. After my own experience of him I felt that he was not altogether unlikely to keep his word, and put a knife into me in the dark if he got the chance; but it was just that chance I did not mean him to get. I made up my mind to have five minutes' conversation with the Lindenbad Polizei-Commissär next morning, and then fell a-thinking of more pressing matters than Alvarez Smith—of the woman I had won, and the future that was before us both; of Aunt Medusa sleeping peacefully in her catafalque at Boodle Park, and dreaming of my marriage with Bella; and of how Aunt Medusa might take *this* match;

of my own entanglements of all sorts, and how they were to be got out of.

And satisfying myself over my last pipe that things would probably go pretty straight, I went to bed about the time the sun had risen, and dreamed of Helen till Ward, who had followed me with the heavy baggage, came in just as he was wont to do in Bruton Street with coffee, and my bath-water.

I had my five minutes' conversation with the Commissär before I went to knife-and-fork breakfast at Lady Oswestry's. No one answering to my description of Alvarez Smith was known to have arrived in Lindenbad at present; but inquiries should be set on foot, and the individual in question kept under proper surveillance, the urbane official assured me.

I greatly, though not altogether, relieved Helen's anxiety on my account by a report of my interview with Herr Kraftenberg. She was still positive that the man she had seen in the moonlight was Alvarez Smith. Two or three days passed by, however, and the man in the cloak who flourished imaginary daggers was neither seen nor heard of further by us. The Polizei-Amt had nothing to tell me about any such person, and Mrs. Wybrowe would at times half admit that she might have been mistaken after all. And then she and I had so much else to think of that she soon learned to banish her misgivings almost entirely.

It seemed, though, she had reason for them. I had been just a week in the Bad when the *dénouement* of this story came about.

We had gone up the river one morning in a 'hen-coop,' had landed some three miles or so above Lindenbad, and strolled away, out of sight of the boatmen, along the bank, down to which extended the low scrub and brushwood of the forest.

We had sat down on a sort of little crag which overhung the river, and from which Helen had discovered a view which she was doing her best to sketch under an organized series of interruptions from me.

Lying there at her feet, watching her eyes, and drinking in her voice, thinking of that new life she had given me, and that was precious to me for her sake, I was terribly near my death.

There was hardly a breath of air astir; and yet, all at once, my pot-hat, that was tilted over my eyes to keep off the sun-glare, rolled away lazily across the turf, flipped, so neatly and lightly that I hardly felt it, off my head.

A sharp crack and a little puff of white smoke rising above a clump of brushwood explained this phenomenon.

I saw at once what this meant. I was on my feet, and half way across to the cover which sheltered my would-be assassin in a couple of bounds. Another bullet whizzed by my ear, and then I had sprung into the thicket, struck, by one lucky blow, a smoking revolver from the shaking hands, and flown at the throat of—Alvarez Smith.

It was as well I had lost no time—he got no chance of using his knife.

I heard Helen scream, and then saw her fall lifeless on the turf where we had been sitting, and then I was wrestling for dear life with a madman. He had no science, but he held me like a fiend. I cut him off his legs again and again; but he clung so desperately to me that I couldn't drop him. Each fresh struggle brought us nearer and nearer the edge of the little crag. I guessed what he wanted to do, and put all my remaining strength into one fierce, desperate effort to fling him.

This time he went down, but my foot had slipped on the dry short turf, and he managed to pull me down upon him.

I felt his arms close round me in a grip of steel as he twisted and writhed towards the edge; I heard his yell of diabolical triumph in my ears; knew that we must roll over; felt the earth slip away from me; felt the mad rush of air by me; felt a shock that seemed to stun me; and then, locked in each other's arms, the water closed over us like a thick darkness.

* * * * *

He must have struck against something in the fall, and have been dead or stunned when he reached the water.

In a second I had wrenched myself free from that deadly grip, had risen to the surface, and was striking out for the bank. Ten minutes more and I was kneeling beside Helen, slowly recovering her consciousness under the sympathizing care of a forest-keeper's wife.

* * * * *

The body of Alvarez Smith was

picked up next day. He had disguised himself so well, while waiting his opportunity to settle matters with me, as to have eluded detection by the Polizei-Amt, but I was able to swear unhesitatingly to his identity, and did, with some pardonable satisfaction.

He is believed to have left no one to exact the forfeit from Helen Wybrowe when she marries me; and, supposing his bargain with the original claimants to have been a lawful one, there is an end, you see, of 'Wybrowe's Will.'

LITTLE TEAS.

OF all modern inventions for the increase of the happiness of our social life I believe 'little teas' to be the greatest and best.

To 'little teas,' therefore, I shall treat my readers in the spirit of a partisan; for it is clear to me that civilization requires 'little teas,' and insists upon having them.

When our honoured great-grandmothers took their 'dish of tea,' it was 'little tea,' for they had it at five o'clock; and

Snuff, or the fan, supplied each pause of chat,
With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.'

But Pope liked a sly fling at the ladies, and so mixed up satire with truth that he ought to have been put upon weak tea for half a season at least, and made sometimes to miss the pretty smiles he had studied so well. Yet we should never have had the brilliant, charming poem from which we have quoted but for a 'little tea,' and for the introduction of coffee at that time I may give this poem's authority against such as proclaim it to be an innovation. It is no innovation. Have it by all means:—

'Coffee, which makes the politician wise,'

And see through all things with his half-shut
eyes.'

Besides, coffee is our elder friend, and takes precedence.

As dinners got later teas were postponed to unnatural periods. They were no longer 'little teas.'

They lost the charm that had belonged to five o'clock. Tea became a mere medicine to refresh the sufferer from a hot room; or a 'something to do' in that time after dinner when ladies were supposed to be dull, almost to extinction: but the dear poetic little tea, full of a life peculiarly its own, was no more.

By degrees this great human want was so universally felt that it had again to be attended to. Ladies got into the schoolrooms and nurseries for an hour of relaxation at the children's tea; into their chambers from the house-keeper's room ladies'-maids brought the dainty drink slyly to little gatherings of the gentler sex, who thus recruited themselves for the dinner campaign. But the necessity being once again in this manner recognized the next step was to make it into a social enjoyment; and then, finally, into the most excellent, harmless, delightful gaiety in the whole arrangement of social life—our modern little teas. So, leaving the days when

'Thou great Anna, whom three realms obey,
Did sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea,

let us come home to our own times, and our most intelligent selves, and, in our own interests, discuss our flourishing institution of 'Little tea.'

Like all flourishing things, it is liable to accidents from too much care, and too little care—it may be

overdone; be made to bear too heavy a burthen; be exhausted by unwise repetition; be overworked, —inf act, or, in a word, be made into something else, when, I need scarcely say, as a *little tea*, the failure is complete. But the little tea, just judiciously elaborated out of the usual domestic daily afternoon refreshment for the purpose of getting a fixed number of chosen friends to call at an hour when you have predetermined to be at home —that is as exquisite an idea as clever kindness ever conceived, and it ought to be worked out in a corresponding spirit.

One great recommendation of the 'little tea' institution is, that any one with sufficient genius to make their ever seeing company pardonable can give it.

But there are a few people who ought neither to give little teas nor go to them. They are of the class who when once seated in a chair cannot get up again. At a morning call they stay an hour; they cannot dismiss themselves. At a little tea they are obstructives, sitting still, and staying silent so pertinaciously that the most thoughtless and the gayest among the other guests begin to wonder if anything is the matter.

Such a person, if very well dressed, looks severe, satirical, critical to ill-nature, and expecting, to such an extent that we know instinctively that to please will be impossible, and lose courage accordingly. But if such a person is dressed in dull garments, what a dreadful protesting atmosphere appears to be gathered round her! She sits in cypress dimness, apparently from a causeless choice; her raiment looks penitential, and she makes one angry by seeming to have selected the occasion of our little tea for the performance of a personal mortification. It may be that this profoundly serious specimen of human nature is neither a criticising nor a mortified character—so much the better for her; appearances are, nevertheless, so entirely against her that she is disqualified, and should never get an invitation for 'little tea.'

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There are men, too, who are thoroughly, by nature, unfitted for this sublime enjoyment. They are the men who *will* perpetually be carrying cake, and offering to do this, that, and the other about the tea-tray; as if people really assembled together at five o'clock in the afternoon to eat and drink. If once a man has got it into his head that he is intended to be useful, put him out of the world of little teas; he is incurable. If he cannot *feel* the difference between the pleasant attentions of a gentleman and that 'waiting on the company' which the servant would do so much better, you cannot explain it to him. Ask him to dinner, but as to little tea, have done with him. Of course he does his unwelcome endeavours from the best of motives, and all for love; but

What dire offence from am'rous causes springs
What mighty contests rise from trivial things.

It is a law in the world of little teas that Belinda must not be bothered.

From this instance you will perceive that I am not writing of those afternoon receptions which are found to be very convenient in London, where people are so many, and distances so great. Let such be as grand, gorgeous, heavy, crowded, as suits the persons concerned. Pleasant nooks are to be found even in them where the real purposes of little teas are carried out, under difficulties, it is true, but yet *not* without success; and they are compensations to be grateful for. But the kind of little tea of which I am writing, whether in town or country, is not a great gathering for the combined purposes of being civil to the greatest possible number of people; of meeting a desired few in the solitude caused by the crowding of the many; of disguising a political interview; or of giving a really excellent concert. No! *my* little tea is the real, undisguised, pure, unadulterated Bohea; the thing that we can all of us give if we have the wit to choose our company, and that which we can all enjoy if we conscientiously bear in

mind the end for which we are assembled; and that end is, simply, the enjoyment of *relaxation*; a far more difficult thing to get than *rest*; for, to get that best medicine for body and mind, true relaxation, you must be both amused and consoled; you must get your enjoyment without fatigue and without unwholesome excitement; you must get gratification with the largest amount of ease and the least possible amount of labour. Therefore the 'little tea' is to be an elaboration of the daily home refreshment, which appeals to everybody's love of smooth ways, pleasant faces, seasons of rest, and the sunny thoughtlessness of leisure hours.

It follows, then, that to bring a well-considered party together for a *good* little tea is a thing by no means to be done without considerable care and thought. It may require no more power than we all of us possess, but then we really must rub up our endowments and use them for the good of our neighbours. I therefore beg leave to protest against certain things.

I protest against being received at the door by a servant who takes my wrappings, if such have been necessary; possesses himself of sticks, parasols, and such minor encumbrances, as if we were all going into a picture exhibition, and were not to be trusted with weapons of offence or mischief; hands me over to one or two trimly-dressed domestics of the female gender, who offer me rations of food with a gentle hint that I may sit in their presence if I please, or if, after my walk, I feel too tired to talk standing to victims as ill off as myself: this sort of thing has no flavour of home in it; it is all business; cruel, hardly-ordered, unrelenting business. All this may herald in a very well-ordered and agreeable party, but we are not going to be blessed by 'little tea.' I submit, sorrowing in my heart; for this is not, I say it again, 'little tea.' I want Belinda,

'As o'er the fragrant steam she bends her head,'

and I find—well, I enter the room,

and try to be grateful, but it is only 'Kettledrum,' after all.

Now, as to the giving of little teas, they are easiest given in the country, but they are most wanted in towns. If you combine both, and tempt out friends from a neighbouring town to your little tea in the country you do a great thing; and being thus favoured by circumstances and situation, your work is well begun, and to carry it out ought to be easy.

Your little tea should be such a triumph of seeming simplicity that every guest, at the highest point of gratification, should feel that it is all so easy they could do it themselves. This will be quite untrue; but a self-deception so agreeable and so flattering will prove that you have accomplished a perfect success. My advice upon it is—Keep your secret, and do it again! And I think it will be found that such successes are only made under certain conditions, about which any amount of variety may circulate, according to seasons, places, and people, but which themselves remain, always, fixed.

These following are some of them.

The rooms are airy, bright, not so full of furniture as to impede motion; for the ease of moving about must be in every one's power; and provided with a sufficiency of comfortable seats, and little moveable tables. People will group then, without trouble, and use one table between three or four for tea, books, talk, or any other entertainment. Little teas are thoroughly social gatherings.

Jean Paul exclaimed, with an exquisite pathos, 'How is each of us so lonely in the wide bosom of the all! Each encased as in his transparent ice palace, our brother is visible, but for ever unattainable.'

Now this description has a cry of despair in it; but there is also in it a truth that every reader must recognize. We find it everywhere: in the house, the city, the suburbs—'close by those meads for ever crowned with flowers'—in our walks, and by our own firesides, and—I must confess it—in the

world of ill-ordered little teas. But it is *because* they are ill-ordered. And if ever there was an assemblage to which Jean Paul's words are *not* applicable it is that which celebrates a perfect 'little tea.'

It is so desirable to have more rooms than one—if your party is large—that the hall should be pressed into the service, and, if necessary, the staircase closed up by high-growing flowers and little trees in pots. But never let any carpenter's work appear. All should wear the look of being no more than the family hands could accomplish. Any evidence of laborious preparation is contrary to the spirit of a little tea, and quite out of harmony with the idea; for you must remember that you are not going to exhibit yourselves either as people of taste, or hospitality, or cleverness, or—worst of all—of affluence. You may be all; in fact, I hope you are; but these facts must have no individuality given to them; they may be the assisting spirits, but there must be no consciousness of their existence: the one thing to be felt is, that you give perfect little teas with such a smooth fitting on of all surrounding circumstances that there is not a crevice for curiosity to pass through or to attract a questioning eye. I need not add, then, that though you may show a really kind courage in not shrinking from a little trouble, you will *never be ambitious*; simplicity is a characteristic of little tea.

A great point for consideration, on your way to perfection, is dress. The neatest and most elegant morning costume is the proper thing. You, who give the little tea, should be dressed, if in summer, in cool materials, as inexpensive as you please, but harmoniously arranged and perfectly well made. You are to stand the test of prolonged observation and daylight; and, moreover, you have invited criticism. Being in your own home, there must not be about you the faintest suspicion of being dressed in your best; and yet it must be plain to every guest that you have made yourself ready to receive them, and

put off, in compliment to them, your everyday apparel. The neat-handed daughters of a house, from the exquisitely dressed hair to the scrupulously fitted little foot, should be models of *home perfection*; for the colouring of women over these little teas forms a great and genuine attraction. It is that which specially distinguishes them; and we, the guests, are injured if we feel that those indescribable but inestimable hues are either wanting or dimmed.

Then your guests must be of many ages, and educated enough to have patience with, if not to enjoy, each other's pursuits. It is quite allowable to make little occasions for the display of different people's attainments; this has to be carefully done without speech-making, but with a gentle decision which gets over objections and debate; it is even *right* to arrange that every one who is going to do anything for the general entertainment shall do it under the *best* possible circumstances, so as to attract to *him* or *her*-self immediate and freely-given praise.

Music is the most general of all the entertainments provided for little teas. But lamentably poor is this fare too often. Still I look on it as a necessity. Quietness may be necessary for *rest*; but for *relaxation* of body and mind there must be something going on. Perpetual talking is a perpetual call on your attention; but singing and playing give you a choice. You may, or you may not, listen; as long as the noise goes on you are free; and if this noise, as I venture to call it, is not absolutely painful, you are probably to some extent entertained. Any how, while it is going on you are freed from all responsibility; simply, nothing is, for the time, expected of you; and this alone is ease to many a too sensitive soul.

I have taken music, you see, on the very lowest ground; alas, that certain excruciating experiences and jarring recollections should have obliged me to do so! But why are not the singers of a family trained to sing expressly for the occasions of little teas? Why may not neigh-

bouring families meet to learn the many delightful trios and quartettes which are among the classic stores of our music shelves? With the necessary good ears, and with only moderate voices, excellent music may be got in this way, of a thoroughly popular sort, with no more difficulty than honest application would conquer.

It makes a very pleasant variety, too, if some of the performers have learnt to sing without any instrumental accompaniment. This, if well done—and it requires great care, expression, precision as to time and emphasis, and the frequent practice of the art till the habit is fixed and the sympathy between the singers perfected—is invariably successful. All givers of little teas should establish a small secret society for the attainment of this charming power, on which no amount of painstaking will be thrown away. It is not easy to do it well. It requires more than the ordinary knowledge of music, perhaps; and the power, gained by perseverance and good teaching, of using the voice as an instrument. It is a very improving study, for conscientious correctness is imperatively demanded when no assistance from an instrumental accompaniment covers the failures of the human voice.

But music should not be the one only amusement to wait on little tea. There should be provision made for other tastes and for long-formed habits. In some quiet corner chessplayers might be free from distractions; books and magazines may be at hand; and such prints as illustrate the interests of the day will offer topics for talk or excite a moment's laughter.

There should, however, be pauses, and people should move about—few things more completely deaden the life of an afternoon party than the eternal sitting in one place to which some of the excellent of the earth are addicted.

But if people are to move from their chairs there must be places to go to. These nooks and corners are easily made by a thoughtful arrangement of seats and sofas,

with reference to pleasant views from pretty windows, convenient tables, groups of flowers, and such like. And if you would have people stand up and feel free, you must never have a table in the middle of the room. It is to tempt people to move and change the scene that two rooms work better than one.

Then, at certain seasons, grapes and wall-fruit, or even strawberries and cream, in the spring, might be permitted an appearance; handed round, placed on the already-mentioned little tables, and followed by the finger-basin and damask napkin to every guest. Ices, also, might be introduced at discretion to make a break. But, above all things, these charming little teas ought not to be allowed to last too long. In the interests of society, and little teas, I say that an hour and a half is the longest time that they ought to occupy; and very right-minded people will not stay beyond an hour. I assure you that too much little tea is simply fatal.

To see our friends really, and with an honest meaning, *at home*, is so charming a recreation that those who have thoroughly enjoyed it would preserve the blessing in freshness and beauty, in health and vigour, at any amount of personal sacrifice in the direction of going early away.

I will now give a concluding caution.

At little tea never admit into the room pet birds in a cage—not even a dove; and certainly not any bird supposed to be capable of imitating the human voice. Dogs are to be kept at a distance, and neither seen nor heard; and—forgive me! forgive me, for I am right—*children*. I am a great lover of children, but little tea is bad for them.

Friends in old age, if they will grant us the benediction of their presence, are to be welcomed proudly; but individuals under fifteen?—No!

Run no risk of spoiling the pleasure of this hour of home enjoyment and real recreation.

‘Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,
And monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all!’

HER MAJESTY'S SALE BY AUCTION.

'ONE Hundred and Seventy-Ninth Sale. Custom House, London. For Sale, by Order of the Honourable the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs, at the Commercial Sale Rooms, Mincing Lane, on —, the following goods, for exportation or home consumption—Beer, Brandy, Candles, Coffee, Cutlery, Eau de Cologne, Flour (wheaten), Geneva, Perfumed Soap, Perfumed Spirits, Private Effects, Rum, Cigars, Spirits, Mixed Spirits, Sugar, Tobacco, Tea, Wine, Watches, and various other goods.'

A medley this, certainly, in which all sorts and sizes of commodities are heaped up together with no other order or system than such as is suggested by the alphabetical initials of the several names. We may rely upon it that 'Private Effects' and 'Various other Goods' are designations which cover a vastly-diversified assemblage of articles. Those of us who are but imperfectly acquainted with the manner in which the Customs department is managed may reasonably marvel how it happens that her Majesty has such a bazaar-full of odds and ends to dispose of.

The rationale of the matter is briefly as follows. The imposition of import duties lies at the bottom of the whole affair. There is always something connected with the non-payment of such duties whenever the Queen's auctioneer is called upon to use his hammer. There may be roguery or there may not; it all depends upon the circumstances of the case. Excepting the tea-ships from China—those famous clippers which make such splendid voyages—and excepting also timber-ships and a few others, it is not customary to have one single commodity only as the cargo of a ship; it is much more usual to have two or many kinds. There are three suppositions that may be made here—all the kinds are duty-payable; or some of them are so; or some are while others are not. Now the Customs authorities look very sharply into the matter to see what is exactly

the state of the case. They know—we all know—that there is a very slippery morality prevalent on these matters. People think it no great sin to cheat the government; it is only taking a smart rise out of Mr. Gladstone, or Mr. Ward Hunt, or Mr. Lowe, or whoever may be Chancellor of the Exchequer; and if that official be a member of the political party opposed to us, we may even succeed in persuading ourselves that it is almost a virtue to prevent good money from going into his coffers. The crime is in being found out, rather than in the thing done. The Commissioners of Customs are wide awake to the prevalence of this plausible philosophy, and store up in their archives a record of all the different modes in which a slightly-immoral public may be tempted to cheat the revenue with regard to customs duties on articles imported. Arriving (say) in the Thames, a ship laden with miscellaneous commodities, on some of which an import duty is laid, is notified to the Customs department, with a list of all the merchandise on board, the names of the consignor or consignee, and so forth. An officer goes on board and takes virtual command over the cargo for a while. He may make almost any search he pleases, and ply the captain with any questions necessary to a due ascertainment of the proper correspondence between the written description and the actual cargo. Very small discrepancies may be rectified by a change in the documents; but anything of serious amount is treated as an offence, to be punished by forfeiture of the goods, perhaps also by the imposition of a fine. If all be honest and above board, the importer or consignee must be prepared to pay the duty upon such of the commodities as are taxed. A calculation is made by the proper officers—so many cwt. of coffee at so much per cwt., so much sugar at so much per cwt., and so on, until the amount which the importers owe to the Queen has been fully ascertained.

Some of the goods are subject to an *ad valorem* duty, according to a certain fixed per-centage of the value. In such cases the officers have to be keen, observant men. A trader is very much tempted to place a lower value than the real one on such commodities, in order that a lower sum may be payable in the form of duty, or to place them in a group more lightly taxed. But the officer is usually equal to the occasion. If he is certain that the articles have been purposely undervalued, with the fraudulent intent here intimated, he at once buys them in the Queen's name; the importer *must* sell them, and at the price named by himself; the money is paid to him, minus the duty and expenses. The system is certainly cunningly devised; for if the trader tries to evade the duty altogether, the goods are absolutely forfeited; whereas if he endeavours merely to lessen the amount of duty by naming an undervalue, he is caught in his own trap by being compelled to sell at that value. The experience acquired by the officers has taught them that one of the most fertile sources of deception is the combination of duty-payable with duty-free articles in the same ship. The former are sometimes packed among the latter in the most ingenious way—barrels, kegs, boxes, hampers, cases, bags, parcels, trusses, canisters, bottles, bundles, wrappers, apparently filled with some kind or kinds of commodity admitted duty free, will often have duty-payable articles thrust out of sight in the very midst of them. The examiners are aware of this possibility, and if their suspicions are aroused, the search is made very close indeed. Every package thus fraudulently built up is declared forfeited; and if the proceedings are very glaring, a fine as well as a forfeit is imposed.

But it may be that the taxable commodities are entered in such a way that an *immediate* payment of the duty is not demanded. The importer, consignee, or wholesale merchant may wish to keep the goods in store for a while, perhaps in expectation of being able to sell at a better price next week or next

month than just at present. The Crown, if the accounts are honestly made up in all other respects, generally permits this; but the owner must not leave the goods in the ship, nor must he take them to his own premises, nor will the Crown take care of them—he must place them in a *bonded warehouse*. These bonded warehouses, which exist at nearly all the ports, belong to private owners, who are paid a rent for the time during which the commodities are stored; but they are specially licensed by the Crown, they are jealously watched by Custom-House officers, and not a package of anything must enter or leave the gates until these Argus-eyed officials 'know the reason why.' In such places the importer deposits his commodities 'in bond,' as it is called, with most rigorous attention to bills of entry, bills of sight, and other documents. He must not transfer any of the goods from one package to another, nor must he inspect them or sort them, without the sanction and presence of officers. If any disallowed proceeding be inadvertently adopted, the owner may possibly be permitted to amend his notice, and make all right and square; but if intentional collusion or deception be discovered, down comes the law upon him: the forfeiture of his goods teaches him that there is something in the old proverb about honesty being the best policy. The Queen takes the tobacco, rum, or what not, from the bonded warehouse, and prepares to sell it by auction when and where she will.

There is another variety of circumstances under which owners part with their property in a way very uncomfortable to themselves. Many of our customs duties are imposed on foreign commodities only when for home consumption, that is, to be bought and retailed and used in the United Kingdom; if they are to be re-exported the duty is not charged. Now in such case there is great need of vigilance on the part of the officers, to see that goods so exempted are not surreptitiously sold for consumption at home. All kinds of artful dodges

would be attempted to evade the law in regard to those excepted cargoes, or portions of cargoes, were it not that the officers are known to be on the alert, ready to pounce down upon any hogshead or bale, case or bag, that is not being treated in the way it should go.

Thus it is, then, that her Majesty becomes, through her Commissioners of Customs, the owner of a very miscellaneous assortment of articles, which she has certainly no wish to keep in store, and which therefore she desires to sell to any of her subjects who will give her cash for them. There are the taxable articles which the owner attempted to get out of the ship without paying the duty. There are those which were made the objects of a pretty scheme for lumping them with other commodities bearing a lower rate of duty. There are those which have been caught neatly in a trap contrived with the intent to pass them at less than the proper value. There are the odds and ends, 'too numerous to mention,' which foolish passengers will persist in smuggling into England without paying duty, by hiding them in their pockets or hats, in their skirts or cloaks, in their bags or portmanteaus; and it must be candidly stated that the fairer half of the creation are not less prone than the rougher half to the adoption of this mode of cheating their beloved sovereign. There are the barrels and kegs which smugglers run on shore on dark nights, in defiance of preventive-service men and coast-guard men; but this kind of roguery has been greatly lessened by a lowering in the number of articles charged with import duty. But besides all these sources of accumulation, the Queen becomes possessed of certain commodities without any concealment or dishonesty whatever on the part of the owners. The goods are voluntarily abandoned. When this occurs it is usually in cases where the duty is very high compared with the intrinsic value of the article. There may be a run of low prices in the market; the owner holds back in hopes of better times; but in the meanwhile he has to pay a rental

for every day's use of the warehouse; and in addition to this, the goods become deteriorated in quality by long delay. Thus does it happen, occasionally, that the owner would rather give up the commodities altogether than keep them longer in the warehouse, or pay the duty and sell at present prices. He makes a present of them to the Crown; the Crown burns or otherwise destroys such of the merchandise as may be too much damaged to command any price at all, and sets by the rest for sale by auction.

When we consider how numerous, how almost infinitely-varied are the articles which may be included in any of the above-named groupings, there will be no ground for marvel that the periodical sales by the Commissioners of Customs deal with a very miscellaneous assemblage of commodities. No one class of buyers will suffice; many classes must be appealed to; and it rests with the officers and the auctioneer so to manage the details as to find purchasers for everything, and at the best prices that can be obtained under the circumstances.

Let us wend our way to that strange Mincing Lane, the very home of grocery and spices, and of a limited number of other eatables and drinkables. You know very little of what Mincing Lane really sells by merely passing through it; for there are but few shops, and few things in the windows. Not only is almost every house occupied by merchants and brokers engaged in this particular kind of commerce, but almost every room in some of the houses is occupied by a separate firm. To so remarkable a degree is this the case, that although there are only sixty houses in Mincing Lane, there are actually three hundred and sixty firms which have their offices or places of business in these houses. Foreigners muster strongly there; for almost everything sold in Mincing Lane has been grown in foreign climes—Langenscheid, Meulengrader, Ducasse, Claveau, Ehlers, Mankiewicz, Mendel, Bennike, Clairmonte, Detmold, Krauss, Mahler, Brumleu,

Corliassas, Cuadra, Freudentheil, Hagdan, Gerich, Herz, Liebermann, Nauen, Reggio, Torre, Vanhouse, Wiese, Albisser, Ziegele, Barriasson, Auerbach, Dael, Rosenthal, Schlemann, Albers, Gildemeister, Brandstetter, De Castro, Deffel, Ernsthausen, Oesterleg, Grosscurth, Luboldt, Knaus, Schröder, Bäsinger, Selb, Schmidt, Vander Zee, Czarnikow, Prier de Same, Jahn, Benito, Ehlers, Glohn, Hecht, Jäger, Jordi, Paparritor, Yriarte, Hintz, Gülich, Mengens, Herzog, Oelrichs, Sifken, Cateaux, Trier, Benoliel—here they all are, large as life, and ready to transact any amount of business that will pay reasonably well. Mincing Lane gives the simple designation of merchant to many of its commercial men; while in other cases qualifying words are used to denote the kind of merchandize chiefly dealt in: such as tea merchant, Oporto merchant, provision merchant, wine merchant, spirit merchant, East India merchant, indigo merchant, colonial produce merchant, West India merchant, oil merchant, drug merchant, French wine merchant, cotton merchant, cotton waste merchant, Montilla wine merchant, rice merchant, together with commission merchant and general merchant. But more remarkable than the merchants are the brokers, who have nothing of their own to sell, but who make a living by buying and selling for other people. Mincing Lane is crowded with them—indigo brokers, colonial brokers, cinnamon brokers, East India brokers, tea brokers, metal brokers, West India brokers, coffee brokers, sugar brokers, refined sugar brokers, fruit brokers, drug brokers, chemical brokers, ivory brokers, drysaltery brokers, produce brokers, cotton brokers, rice brokers, and a few ship and insurance brokers—though these latter affect Fenchurch and Leadenhall Streets rather than Mincing Lane. An immense amount of business is transacted by brokers, who know all the buyers and all the sellers, and how to bring them together. The Commercial Sale Rooms are one of the head-quarters of the Mincing Lane merchants and bro-

kers; and here the Queen holds her periodical sales by auction of Custom House forfeitures.

It is evident at a glance, when the auctioneer is mounted on his rostrum at the Commercial Sale Room, that he is confronted by persons well up in the technical details of Custom House usages. They know all about 'rummage' and 'ullage.' They are familiar with the strange mode adopted of denoting fractional parts of a gallon of spirits, by dividing one gallon into thirty-two parts, and then dividing one of those parts into tenths. They are not frightened at such a

fraction as $\left(\frac{1}{32}\right)$ which results from such a mode of computation, but which looks to ordinary folk a very complicated way of saying seven-tenths of a gill. They know what the catalogue means by its variations in the official conditions of sale. When they are told that some of the lots are to be sold 'For Home Consumption, on payment of the proper duties;' that others may be sold 'For Exportation or Home Consumption, on payment of the proper duties;' that they may be sold 'at buyers' prices,' or 'all at' a minimum price named by the Government, or at any price that exceeds (so as to cover) the duty; that others are 'To be delivered to licensed manufacturers only, and to be packed and labelled at the buyers' expense;' that in others 'The price of the stone bottle (1s. 2d.) to be paid by the purchaser'—when they are told these things, they are at no loss to put the proper interpretation on each variety of condition or stipulation. It naturally results from all this, that nearly the whole of the buyers are persons connected with the particular trades to which the commodities belong; they know the wholesale houses, they know the recognized brokers, they know the current prices; and this accumulated knowledge places them in a position to judge at once whether it is or is not advantageous to purchase a particular lot at a particular price. One of the uninitiated may prime himself beforehand to a certain extent. He may ferret out the im-

portant fact that *rummage* denotes one kind, and *seizure* another kind, of commodities offered for sale by the Customs authorities; and that *ullage* is the quantity of liquor in a cask when the said cask is not quite full. But after all, such knowledge only tells to a limited degree in the auction room; you feel that you are still an outsider, and that you ought to look with some kind of reverence to those who evidently know all about it.

How the lots become made up as they are only the initiated can say. '78 sample bottles, 3 gallons, red wine, $\frac{1}{2}$; 21 pint bottles, 1 & 2 gallons, white wine, $\frac{1}{2}$ (ullage)!' This is all Greek to an outsider. And when we see the auctioneer knock down for one shilling a lot comprising 13 bottles of cordials, 3 bottles of cherry cordials, and 1 bottle of sweetened spirits, we consider whether all the people in the room are gone mad, to let such a bargain slip from them; but we find that the buyer will have to pay the duty, and possibly there are other little secrets which need consideration. He must surely have been an impudent fellow who bid half a crown for '6 boxes of candied peel, 1 lb. confectionery, 2 qrs. figs, 20 lb. raisins, 2 baskets, 1 qr. 22 lb. figs, 2 ullage bottle vinegar, about 17 lb. perfumed soap;' but probably he was prepared for the result, that the biddings ran up to 44s.; and very likely he was the last bidder as well as the first. 'Three cases, articles of tin manufacture;' somebody bid 10s. for this, and a most spirited competition ran up the biddings to 7l. 10s. Whether culinary tins or tin toys, they had been well inspected beforehand, and each bidder knew precisely what he would do with them if he became the purchaser. It may be mentioned here, that none of the articles are in the sale-room; they are in warehouses and cellars at the several docks and at the Custom House, where they have been on view for two or three days, and where the wines and spirits have been tasted under certain conditions. Every man at the sale-room has his catalogue, and

knows precisely which lot or lots may be worth his attention. 'About 261 pieces of china ware;' where they came from, or why the Queen obtained them as 'rummage,' was not stated, but the lot brought 52s. —say, five pieces of china for a shilling. '20 lb cigars.' Mercy on us! When we find these going at 5s. 6d. per lb., out of which 5s. goes for duty, leaving only 6d. per lb. for the cigars themselves, we marvel what the tobacco may be like! 'Six silver watches,' put up by the Crown at 3l. the lot, and knocked down at 5l. 15s., or about 19s. each. Well: may they keep good time! If the reader can steady his mind to a consideration of such a medley, let him decide how much he would give for '1 case, 6 bottles, perfumery; 9 lb. chocolate; 1 piece linen manufacture; 1 piece cotton; 1 coffee roaster; 1 bottle, silver leaf; 1 empty flask and toys; 2 bottles drugs; 4 boxes stearine candles; 1 box painters' colours:' the lot went for 49s. '276 bottles hair oil, 9 bottles hair wash, 42 packages sealing-wax, 1 lb. stearine candles, 25 lb. ditto:' how much? 84s. About 3d. a bottle for the hair oil, and all the sealing-wax and candles given in. If there be any raiment, new or old, male or female, adult or juvenile, elegant or coarse, for sale, bidders of another class make their appearance in the room. A lot for which Messrs. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Nathan, Benjamin, and Solomon bid very actively, was '1 box, sundry articles of wearing apparel; 12 books, and sundry private effects; 4 pairs woollen socks; 6 shirts; 1 pair boots; 4 coats; 6 pairs trousers; 3 vests; 2 pairs socks; 2 neckties; 1 muffler; 1 cask, containing wild camomile flowers.' Why the Queen seized these eligible commodities is a matter for speculation; but she put them up at 30s., and the biddings advanced a shilling or two at a time, until at length,—'Going! Going! Going at 96s.1 Gone.'

* Why does not the Queen teach her catalogue-maker how to spell? In one place he says, 'segars;' in others 'cigars.'

MEALS FOR THE MILLION.

THE old proverb which declares our dinners and our cooks to come from such very different sources of supply is justified in no country so completely as in our own. If expense be no consideration, you can get a better dinner in London than in any capital of Europe. This is the opinion of those best acquainted with the resources of the head quarters of cookery—Paris herself. And between an English dinner *de luxe* and a French dinner *de luxe* there is no difference as concerns character. The 'plain roast and boiled' which contented even the well-to-do of our forefathers, will no longer pass muster among those who have a choice in the matter; and many who have not a choice chafe at the severe familiarity with which their class were formerly content.

'Why was I born with tastes refined—
Why do I love Laflitte'

was the despairing exclamation of a fugitive poet who was born for better things than he could get; and there are many among us in these days who have the 'fatal gift' of palates above their station in life—who are spoiled for the ordinary domestic dinner by the occasional experience of a more festive repast out of doors. For people of limited means may make themselves acquainted with the rudiments of a good dinner at even second and third rate restaurants in London; and discriminating diners-out fare far better than they could hope to fare at home upon the same expenditure. You cannot dine with Lucullus for five shillings in the great metropolis; but you can get a very fair repast, comprising all the representative courses, for that amount, at tolerably - conspicuous places; and if you have the hardihood to dive into Soho, you may do it for half the money. But these advantages are impracticable for people in domestic life; and domestic cooking under conditions of moderate means is a sad thing even to think about. The ordinary class of cooks, who do not aspire to be called more

than 'plain,' are simply monsters in female form. They cannot cook a potato, to begin with, even in the most primitive manner. They can in Ireland by intuition. In that distracted country they may shoot landlords, but their conduct in connection with potatoes is beyond reproach. So great is their enthusiasm for the vegetable, that they put it into poetry, and give it a place of honour shared only with *potheen*. How sings a national, but anonymous bard?

'The greatest diversion that's under the sun
Is to sit by the fire 'till the pratties are
done—

The beautiful creatures all bursting with pride,
And a noggin of buttermilk close by your
side.'

Fancy such an anomaly as the glorification of the potato in an English song! British rhymsters have done something for roast beef, but never in a spirit as if they cared about the cookery; and as for Scottish poets, we have it, on the authority of Mr. Lever's Major O'Shaughnessy, that their songs embrace only two subjects—they are devoted either to 'lasses with lint white locks or some absurd laudation of the barley bree.' This is a libel, of course, for which damages might be claimed in a court of law; but I believe I am right—I sit corrected if wrong—in declaring that Scottish poets have never written in praise of porridge.

However this may be, it is certain that Englishmen have no national dish for which they have an affection for its own sake. Plum pudding cannot be counted, for it is connected only with Christmas, and mainly with juvenile tastes; and as for roast beef, the sentiment connected with it is fast declining in the present day. When in full force, it was especially in honour of the great feast of the year; and in later times it has maintained its place principally in association with British triumphs over a neighbouring nation, then supposed to feed only upon frogs—with 'the Battle and the Breeze' and the flattering

idea that one Englishman could always beat ten Frenchmen upon the shortest notice. No: the English have no national dish which, as the food of the nation, they have been able to defend against all comers; they have no *pot-au-feu*, for instance, like the French; and the million—the mass of the people—know nothing, and care nothing, about the manner in which their food should be cooked. The poorest families live upon tea and bread and butter to a distressing extent, with only occasional intervals of meat; and when their meat comes—it may be twice, or perhaps only once a week—what can they make of it? The raw material is the worst that the market can supply. There is no more sad sight in London than that of workmen's wives on Saturday nights bargaining for stale pieces with the fresh pieces before their eyes—reserved for people with more money. And the intelligent interest taken by children in the matter is sadder still—poor little things, who, so far from shuddering, as more opulent children would do, at the mere aspect of a butcher's shop, take a technical interest in the display, worship sirloins from afar, and admire mutton-chops as if they were so many works of art. Children take instinctively the tone of their parents. I once heard of a little girl—a pretty little thing who had been brought up in luxury, her mother being a principal singer at the Italian Opera. Mamma was making a tour in the provinces under the auspices of a distinguished *entrepreneur*, who farmed the whole party, and provided everything. They arrived one night at a great commercial town, where the best accommodation in the best hotel had been provided for their reception. The family walked through the suite of apartments—alive with gilding and mirrors—and some surprise was expressed at the more than usual magnificence. '*N'importe*,' said the charming child, throwing the light of her beaming eyes round the decorations—'*N'importe*; *c'est Brown qui paie*.' Brown, of course, was the *entrepreneur*. The poor children

who admire the mutton-chops see things in a similar spirit. A well-known author tells us that he once heard a couple of little girls of this class who were talking upon personal matters, and one said to the other, 'Once I had a halfpenny, and bought apples with it.' They were taking an independent view of the things, and casting aside family cares; but the common talk of the poor is upon matters of domestic economy which they hear discussed by their parents.

But to return. When the poor have got their meat, what do they do with it? We have our experience of 'plain cooks' who come from this class. We know that they spoil half the food committed to their care. They cannot, of course, cook a potato. It comes up three-cornered as to shape, and black and blue as regards appearance. In consistency it is too soft without and too hard within. The result is an infliction upon the consumer. They serve your mutton and your beef in a similar fashion; and if you urge upon them the simplest tactics upon the authority of the cookery books, they tell you that they do not understand these French fashions—proper cookery of the plainest kind they consider foreign, and despise accordingly. These are the defects of professionals; we may suppose, therefore, if we did not know, what their amateur cookery must be. It is about as savage, in fact, as that of cannibals, who are content to cut up their enemies into convenient morsels and throw them into the flames. Even prosperous people of the humbler ranks are seldom able to get a dinner properly prepared at home—it is usually sent to the baker's. When they *do* cook at home there is more waste, proportionately, than there is in a nobleman's kitchen. To take a simple illustration: they seldom think of utilizing the water in which meat has been boiled, for the sake of soup, but throw it away with a large proportion of the strength of the meat.

The poorer classes of French, with far inferior materials, live in a state of comparative luxury. The Paris

ouvrier, in however small a way, has a regular *cuisine*. His wife, whatever else she is not, is sure to be a cook. The fare may be a little monotonous—the standing *pot-au-feu* being its foundation—but it is not more monotonous than the food of the poor in this country. The French peasant, too, has the same advantages. The preparation of his meals is the main business of his wife. Look into his cottage about the middle of the day, and you will find the dame devoting her whole energies to the task. She has an array of appliances in the way of pots and pans of which an English housewife of the same class would scarcely know the use. Such appurtenances are as inevitable in the French home as the prints of Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI. in various phases of their troubles, the murder of the Princesse de Lamballe, and Napoléon crossing the bridge of Lodi, that adorn the walls. She expects her husband and sons shortly to arrive, and the savour of the fare with which they are to be welcomed is appetizing even to visitors who have breakfasted baronially and mean to dine ducally. Were she and her husband and sons English instead of French, they would not dine but would only ‘get their dinners.’ In England the meal would be snatched—in France it is deliberately enjoyed. In France, in all grades of life, dinner is the event of the day—with a little concession in favour of breakfast, the claims of which are recognized in a proportionate degree. The food may not be sumptuous, but it is wholesome and savoury, and differs, therefore, in both respects, from that of the poor in England. The time has long since passed when the French were supposed to live upon frogs. We are most of us aware in these days that the only kind of frog that ever comes to the kitchen—and only the legs of these are eaten—is by no means plentiful, and can be included therefore only in costly repasts. As for horse, the consumption of the noble animal is certainly increasing in France, but I suspect principally among intelligently experimental people,

and not as an economical alternative to beef. Indeed the horse *must* be more expensive than the ox as an article of food, if it be killed in a healthy state and is really fit to be eaten. Under other conditions a repugnance to partake of him need not be associated with prejudice against horseflesh merely as a novelty. As for the ‘movement’ in England, it obtained no hold upon the people, nor is it likely to do so. Apart from the practical objection—which is well appreciated in this country—Englishmen have a natural dislike to exploring fresh fields for animal food, and they have a sentimental feeling in favour of the horse which is quite strong enough to keep him out of the kitchen. Many men will overwork and torture him, and treat the noblest servant of the human race with shameful ingratitude. But it does not follow, therefore, that they will eat him. The same kind of people will overwork, torture, and generally ill-treat any of their own species over whom they have authority—for the sake of money, or in a brutal spirit of tyranny. But they would not feed upon their human victims for all that; and as regards their carnivorous requirements they draw the line decidedly at the horse. The idea of making a meal upon an animal that had won money for him in a race, earned money for him between the shafts, or pulling at the plough, carried him to battle, after the hounds, or even in the Park—is repugnant to an Englishman in any condition of life; and there is no fear of any class of the tribe, from that of Blue Gown to that of Old Dobbin, finding his way to the meat markets in this country. It is true that Englishmen make the most of the horse after he is dead, and his flesh is sold as food for domestic animals, and the fact is repulsive enough; but there is some difference between selling a dead horse and killing him for your food.

The great argument used by the advocates of horse eating—a very delusive one, as we have seen—is the increasing expense of animal

food, which makes wholesome meat almost a prohibited article to the poorest classes in England. It is satisfactory, therefore, to find that new fields of supply have been opened—not in this country and in an opposition to a very proper prejudice, but on the other side of the globe and under conditions opposed to no prejudice whatever—except, indeed, in the absence or experience, the natural suspicion that the promises held forth were too good to be true.

In England we have too many people and not enough food; in Australia they have too few people, and more food than they know what to do with. Here we may consider ourselves fortunate, if, in a few years, we can find standing room; there, they have vast regions, known and unknown, waiting for inhabitants. The tendency of things is that the population of this country will drift in enormous numbers to the fifth quarter of the globe. In the mean time, as the hungry Mahomet will not, or cannot, go all at once to the Meat Mountain, the Meat Mountain must come to him. Thanks to some enterprising speculators, the superfluous food of the antipodes is being brought to our doors; and the only difficulty remaining is to induce those who guard our doors to receive it. That there should be some doubt in the first instance was to be expected. Over half the circumference of the globe is a long way to look for a leg of mutton; and there seemed some justification for the fear that it might not be quite fit to eat upon its arrival. But the notion is nonsense after all. Everybody eats sardines. Sometimes they eat sprats in sardine form under the influence of delusion. Neither the true nor the false fish are brought quite so far as the distance between this country and Australia; but they are continually kept as long as would suffice for the voyage, and we have no prejudice against them. On the contrary, we consume sardines rather as luxuries than otherwise; we certainly do not employ them as economical provender for schools or families. They are eaten by the

rich and the generally well-to-do; and if not partaken of by the poor, it is because, though reasonable enough in price, they are not sufficiently profitable articles of consumption. Then again, everybody, at least occasionally, eats provisions preserved in tins—soups and stews especially, which, as sold by Messrs. — and Messrs. — (let us not make invidious distinctions), are real boons to housekeepers, large and small. These articles are of course prepared in this country, but, like sardines, they are frequently kept a sufficient time before consumption to have made a long voyage. And they have very frequently made a long voyage before they are disposed of. The exportation of tinned provisions to India is enormous; and among our countrymen in the East they are esteemed the greatest of luxuries. The poor there cannot pay for them; but they are on every rich man's table. Oysters, lobsters, and salmon, are not to be obtained except in the hermetically sealed condition; but other articles which are to be had fresh from the local bazaars find most favour when imported; and it is a positive recommendation to any dishes offered to you at a dinner party in India, if your host is able to say that they have come from England. Doubtless there is a little national partiality in the preference. But English people accustomed to luxurious living would not eat day after day of preserved bacon and preserved soups and stews, unless they were not only fit for food, but worthy of the high prices they command. Why, then, should there be any prejudice against Australian meat—supposing that it reaches us in as good condition as English meat arrives in India? On the contrary, there is every reason why it should be the more welcomed—seeing that it is intended to supply a positive need and to facilitate a desirable economy. It seems strange, indeed, if food furnished under conditions acceptable to the rich in India should be spurned upon sentimental grounds by the poor in England. Yet it is certain that there has been

a feeling against Australian meat, to be accounted for only upon the inconsistent ground that it is cheap, and therefore an immense boon to immense numbers of persons. The idea prevailed, it is said, that the importation was specially intended for the poor—that the production was something inferior, and was despised by those who could afford to buy in the ordinary markets. This was quite enough to cause mistrust; for the poor have a keen sense of the rights of equality, and will never consent to be classified in such a matter as food. Moreover, some of the earlier experiments in preserving were not so successful as they have been since, and the feasibility of the scheme did not pass unquestioned. But by degrees the novelty became better known—it ceased to be a novelty, in fact—and the supply becoming steady, there was reason to suppose that something like a regular demand was growing up. Those who made the first experiments in the new food were, I believe, not so much the poor proper as better classes of persons having reasons for the practice of economy, or desirous upon general grounds to put the promises of the importers to a test. The poor, however, soon began to see their own advantage in the matter; and the original prejudice, though still existing to some extent, is fast disappearing under the influence of experience. There are now two large purveyors of Australian meat—a company and a private firm—and they are believed to have an enormous trade. The founders of the Australian Meat Company were among the pioneers of the movement; but they have an enterprising follower in the private firm, which has given a development to the original design well worthy of notice—that is to say, he has started an establishment where his retail customers can consume their purchases on the premises.

Norton Folgate, where the premises are situated, is not a nice place to look at, and it appears to have a speciality for not being witty. At any rate, one of the

authors of the 'Rejected Addresses,' describing the *personnel* of a City entertainment (in a strictly ironical manner), infers as much, when he says—

'Comme il faut from Butchers' Row,
Elegance from Aldgate,
Modish airs from Wapping Stairs,
And wit from Norton Folgate.'

Never mind: if Norton Folgate is not a nice place to look at, it is all the more likely to be nearer the residences of many patrons of the penny dinners; and if it is not witty, let us hope that it is wise, and will encourage their consumption. The establishment itself is like an oasis in a desert—so cheerful is it, in appearance. Its normal aspect from the pavement is that of an ordinary shop for the sale of cooked provisions, piles of which are displayed in the window, to the evident delight of the local public, who crowd round as people do round shows at a fair. And I am certain that neither the pig-faced lady nor the spotted boy could command more rapt attention than do the joints and 'nuggets' of mutton, the sausages, and the colonies here exhibited in so attractive a form. Just as you see people at a show, too—every now and then one or two of the admirers are carried away by their feelings, make a clutch at the coppers in their pockets, and go inside, followed by the eyes of the remainder, who regard them for the time being in the light of public characters. We—that is to say, myself and a friend—follow some of these, partake of their temporary distinction, and find ourselves in a gorgeous scene. It is Christmas week, so the decorations may be special for the occasion: they certainly do great credit to glazed calico of rainbow hues; and the inscriptions, setting forth the names of the Antipodean places which are the sources of supply, add information to ornament. There is a crowd of persons round the counter, some making purchases with a view to carrying them away; others, who have taken tickets at a place provided for the purpose, waiting for the dinners

which they mean to consume summarily—the primitive arrangement being that each diner takes his own plate and plants himself at one of the tables inside, thus simplifying the duties of the waiter, who has only to collect the crockery from time to time.

By inside, I mean a large room at the back of the shop, and decorated in the same festive manner. The tables extend on either side as you enter, and range from one end to the other. There are nearly as many guests as they can accommodate, although it is two o'clock in the afternoon, and the great rush is over; for the mass of diners incline to early hours, and keep them with a punctuality which is said to be the soul of business, and has a great deal to do with pleasure also. To characterize the class of persons present, one would have to say, in the first place, that they are mixed. We expected to find none but the poorest class represented—to find even beggars regaling themselves upon the bounty received at the last street corner. And certainly you have a right to suppose, when a mendicant makes twopence upon the distinct understanding that he has not tasted food since some fancy period in the past, that he will immediately supply the deficiency at the most convenient place. But beggars, we were told, like thieves, disdain such fare and such company as are to be found in Norton Folgate, and not by these does the establishment expect or desire to be supported. Some of the diners to-day are poor enough, judging by appearances. But they seem to be respectable people; and some are of a grade that you would scarcely expect to see represented at such a place. Those two young men, for instance, in the sleek chimney-pot hats (the run of hats are wide-awake) and careful collars with the corners turned down—as if to mark the place where they had left off *not* reading—are clerks, I suppose, or shopkeepers' assistants. If their salaries amount to only fifty pounds a year, which is possible enough, the place must be as great a boon to them as to even poorer

people, who are not obliged to wear coats of conventional cut, sleek chimney-pots, and the dog's-eared collars aforesaid. But youth is ever open to temptation, and these youngsters seem to be wasting their substance on riotous living. Not content with the penny plate of satisfying soup, nor even with the twopenny one of Irish stew, they are actually taking both—dining off two courses, the young gourmands. The penny plate is indeed a dinner to many of the customers, being satisfying, as I have said. As for the twopenny plate, it is a feast, including, as it does, potatoes and the usual ingredients of the dish. Irish stew, by-the-way, is the only solid form in which the meat is dispensed here: for it goes somewhat farther in this form than in any other, and variety would be difficult to obtain under the general conditions of supply and service.

I notice several other young men of a similar stamp, and here and there a person of more mature years and more dignified bearing, with all the signs—and signs they are—of having seen better days. That man, for instance, with the grizzled hair and whisker—the latter carefully trimmed—has certainly not been accustomed all his life to this kind of *cuisine*. His reverses, too, must have been recent; for the frock-coat which he wears so closely buttoned up is an old coat, but has evidently been a good one—and there is as much difference between an old good coat and an old bad coat, as there is between the two garments when both are new. Indeed it is in its decline, perhaps, that the good coat principally asserts itself. The wearer in the present case has, I suspect, advertised in the 'Times' for employment, and is dining in Norton Folgate pending an answer to his appeal.

There is a little of the 'rough' element in the society, but not much; and it gets less, we are told, as the better element increases. For 'roughs' stand by their order, and are averse to respectable interlopers. With all respect for the 'roughs,' it must be said that the prejudice is a fortunate one; for it is the respect-

able poor who suffer most from poverty, and the penny dinner is a far greater boon to them than it is to the class who are accustomed to scramble for their food from day to day.

It remains to give a few details of what the food consists. It is all mutton, but varied, as we have seen, in form. Beyond the dining-room is the store where it may be seen in its uncooked state. Large barrels are standing on end in rows. It is in these that the bulk of the meat is packed, and, as it appears, in most effectual style. The joints you see hanging from the beams above you and piled on the tables against the wall, are all alike. They are all haunches of mutton, with the bones removed except as regards the shank-bone, by which they may be most conveniently handled. The other parts of the animal, it seems, can be made more profitable in the colony, owing to the larger amount of fat that they contain. They are melted down, for the most part, and made into tallow. Some of the melted fat is used to fill up the vacant space after the meat has been placed in the barrels; and they are thus sealed hermetically in a more efficient manner than by any other process. The meat has been slightly salted previously, and it certainly seems to have suffered nothing in health and freshness during its travels. The general verdict as regards taste is in its favour. Its price is only fourpence halfpenny a pound. The same meat is brought over, for the convenience of retail purchasers, in tins. This is cooked, and costs in that state about sixpence a pound. Complaints are occasionally made about the tinned meat, which sometimes turns up in bad condition. But this, it seems, is simply due to the occasional failure of the 'hermetically sealing' process. Unless the air inside is thoroughly ex-

hausted before the final closing, the contents will spoil, and this part of the work requires considerable nicety. Perhaps there is a want of skilled hands to perform it, for we never hear of the same complaint being made of preserved meats in Europe. However, the purveyors make a point of taking back all the failures, and giving successes in exchange, so that it is the purchaser's own fault if he is a sufferer.

Beyond this storeroom is that important place, the kitchen, with such enormous coppers, and such a wonderful engine for chopping the Irish stew in its preliminary stage! The latter looks like a guillotine worked by machinery—a refinement unknown even to revolutionary France. As for the coppers, beholding the contents stirred with those enormous ladles, your first impression is a very simple one—that you would not like to fall in; the next is that there is a great deal of steam about, and that the smell of dinner is overpowering. How the stokers stand for so long as they do is difficult to imagine. But discomforts of this kind are inseparable from feasting on a large scale; and at Norton Folgate, we were told, about a thousand persons are entertained every day.

May their shadows never grow less in number! For the movement is a very excellent one, and deserves every kind of recommendation that can lead to its extension. Other aid it does not require, as the 'Penny Dinners' are supplied upon purely commercial principles. A profit is secured by the purveyors, and the penny, twopenny, or threepenny diners, as the case may be, are under no obligation to anybody. They pay their pence and keep the place going, upon as honourable conditions as the patrons of the London Tavern or the Freemasons' pay their guineas with the same result.

S. L. B.





Drawn by Wm. Drummond.

LONDON SILHOUETTES.—LUNCHEON PARLOR.



Didnt come out yesterday
Alfred Thompson

A royal Salute

THE COMING



Four girls to Commoners
The fifth must have a Coronet



Came out last Season



Apropos de bottes



Will conquer or Die

SEASON

LUNCHEON BARS.

I HAVE heard a lunch defined as an insult to one's breakfast and an outrage on one's dinner. Some people evade the imputation by dining at lunch time, or by making the lunch one's dinner. In modern life we nearly all dine in the evening, but, nevertheless, we feel hungriest at the noonday; and so it is said that, from her Majesty downwards, we make a dinner at our lunch, and a supper at our dinner. There are people who will only take a biscuit or a crust for lunch, and some who only take the very slightest breakfast and hold out till an eight o'clock dinner. I apprehend that is a bad habit. It was Lord George Bentinck's, and he dropped rather suddenly. The etherealized beings whom we meet at dinner-parties make bird-like peckings, which contrast gracefully with our grosser feeding. But we say commonly that they have virtually made a good wholesome dinner at half-past one—a hot fowl or leg of mutton—and have carried out the idea by a five o'clock cup of tea. But let not the ladies suppose that the worthy husband has been working like a steam engine all day without taking in coal and water. The noble animal has perhaps been disporting himself in rich pastures since breakfast-time, and returns home to the great event of the day in a highly-fed and succulent condition. He has made ample acquaintance with the great modern institution of Luncheon Bars.

And let it not be supposed that luncheon is confined to the modest repast snatched hastily at a luncheon bar. Our homely notes will chiefly be confined to these; but the term is construed in a large and liberal sense. There are many men who make a thoroughly British dinner for their lunch, without prejudice to the later refection at home. A fish dinner, whether at Billingsgate or in Cheapside, is a great favourite. Fish presents the advantage of being easily and soon digested, and so leaving its votaries in an orthodox state of hunger for the evening. I sup-

pose it is on this account that M. Agassiz so strongly presses men, especially of a sedentary and literary life, to make fish as large an element as possible in their diet. The system of Lent, when it prevailed, certainly had the advantage of encouraging our fisheries, and giving men a wholesome change from the perpetual meat diet. You get an astonishing amount of fish at these places, salmon and all other things in their season; but the chairs are so close, the tables so crowded, the waiting so hurried, that fish being very bony creatures, their consumption must be attended with some peril. As for a bowl of oyster sauce to keep the cod in company, it reminds us of the Virgilian line, 'Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto.' At these fish dinners they brew a very seductive liquor called *punch*, and its potation during business hours is occasionally disastrous to ordinary business purposes. Many at other places go in for a cut off the joint, with cheese and celery, and, like soldiers, find that in the daily battle of life they can fight best upon beef. Some time ago there was a letter strongly recommending the French eating-houses in the mysterious region skirted by the squares of Leicester and Soho. I went at two o'clock, being given to understand that this was a good time of the day. And they certainly gave you a clear, good, vegetable soup, and, wonderful to say, only charged you threepence for it, thereby opening up a vista of views respecting culinary profits. The 'Times' said—and I will not dispute its opinion—that it was as good as the soup which you get at the clubs. But when upon the simple basis of soup you proceeded to elaborate a good French lunch, then the time consumed between the removes was immense. The French have no idea of time, and they think that you have no idea either. Order a French dinner, if you will, or go to sup with choice spirits, with whom it is pleasant to while away some hours; but to have a good lunch, and to have

it quick, is a contradiction in terms at a French eating-house.

And this reminds me of the fundamental distinction between the frequenters of luncheon bars. There are those, according to the classical proverb, who live to eat, and those who eat to live. There are some persons who enter a luncheon bar with a knowingness and a deliberation which indicate that they are about to lay out the limited space of time available for the luncheon bar to the greatest possible advantage. They select the best bar, and at the best bar (they select the best things. With a cool, critical eye they run down the bill of fare, and with instinctive judgment make a selection which reflects credit on their taste. But if a man is exceedingly busy, or very much occupied in mind, he has no time for this. He has perhaps stayed at his post until faintness, or the gnawing tooth of hunger, has absolutely driven him from his work to the luncheon bar; and thus he has a wandering eye and a preoccupied air. He has not the slightest idea what he is eating, whether roast or boiled, joint or *entrée*. He satisfies a brute, canine instinct, and retires. Such a man has been known to come to a luncheon bar with a pen behind his ear. Such a one always brings a note-book, some memoranda, or a pocketful of letters with him. Such a one has a business friend with him; and they will continue their discussion or negotiation in the brief allotment of time apportioned to refectation. They are probably lean, unwholesome-looking men, with bodily disorganization of some sort setting in, chiefly because they bolt their food whole, and allow no time for digestion. I know of an invalid of this sort, who, in solemn repentance for his ill-advised alacrity in feeding, has stuck up all over his house inscriptions in large letters—'Masticate, masticate, masticate!' A judicious man, who knows that he has a great deal of important work to do, and wishes to do it in a high state of bodily efficiency, generally confines himself to a mutton chop and a glass of sherry, which he transacts leisurely. If there is head-

work, really requiring attention, a man is very careful in his diet. You cannot be loading two great organs with work at the same time without impeding and impairing their action. This is a most elementary physiological truth. The other day I saw one of our most distinguished writers take his lunch at a luncheon bar which some of us know, in the immediate vicinity of the British Museum. It consisted of a cold sausage and a hot potato. A glass of beer was ordered for the good of the house, but, I believe, not drunk. That was perhaps as heavy a lunch as he dared venture with important work on hand in the great reading room.

Then there are City luncheon places with specialties. Birch's in Cornhill is such a place. Birch has a speciality, and that speciality is soup. You can go to Birch's and get turtle soup—calipash and calipee—four shillings a plate. You sometimes find people coming from the West Indies who are satiated with turtle—turtle chops, and turtle soup, and yet this simple necessity of life is considerably removed from the reach of ordinary Londoners. At Birch's they will give you pastry and patties, but the theory of the institution is manifestly turtle soup, with some sound sherry to carry out the idea. You will find the rooms filled, three stories of them, with soup-devouring human beings; and in the late cold wintry weather hot soup really appeared to be the best thing which you could devour. Ladies abound here—not curtained off into a separate domain of their own and an escort *not de rigueur*—but diffusing a charm and an aroma over the apartment. Comfortable and spacious are these ladies, by-the-way, with an appearance suggestive of extreme solvency on the part of themselves or their male belongings. I am persuaded that directly an old lady has received her dividend at the Bank she crosses the road and gets a basin of turtle soup at Birch's. 'Pimm's,' as we used to call it, is also a well-known luncheon place; it belongs to Mr. Sawyer now—the old oyster shop in which the City men, going down

to their suburban homes in the evening, especially from the Saturday to the Monday, will pick out some of the finest and reddest lobsters or give their orders for a barrel of oysters. Here we used to partake plentifully of that delicate mollusk, but, alas! only daintily and sparingly now, at their well-nigh prohibitive prices. Now that oysters are so dear I should not be surprised if the British public made a direct set in the direction of periwinkles. I talked once with an enlightened fishmonger who told me that he always gave his children *carte blanche* among the periwinkles, inasmuch as they were so peculiarly wholesome. Mr. Sawyer has had a large handsome luncheon bar opened next to the fish shop, which fills remarkably well. You have to stand, but you are served with the most commendable quickness, and depart speedily, and you have something moderate to pay. I have heard it asserted that every human being is like some animal. You become convinced of the truths of the assertion when you are standing at a large London luncheon bar. You see monkeyfied men, doggified men, equine, and even, I am afraid, asinine men, all busy in the great animal function of taking in provender. The most dignified beings of the human race would, however, suffer some loss of dignity when they take their lunch, as the children of Israel took their last taste of the fleshpots of Egypt, standing and with their loins girded. Pimm's, however, is entitled to the merit of presenting a considerable variety of comestibles. I entertain a strong opinion that as a man of average life spends many months in the operation of dining, it is worth his while to do so as gracefully and with as much taste as he can. Now at Pimm's they certainly give you a considerable variety. And if there are times in which it is prudent to dine off a single dish, I need scarcely say with what anxious solicitude that dish should be selected. On most occasions it is pleasant and agreeable that there should be a variety. Now Pimm will give you lobster dressed, or eccl-

loped oyster reposing amid bread crumbs in the scallop shell, or some game pie, the British chop, &c. &c.

Several crowded luncheon bars will give you plenty of good things, but would positively decline to accommodate you with a chair, and would look with horror on the intrusion of a newspaper. The reason is obvious enough. Their great rooms stand empty nearly all the day, but will fill to overflowing in the hour or hour and a half to two hours in the middle of the day. Then there is a rush of business, and it is of course an object to obtain as much business as possible. To achieve this desirable object the principle seems to be to make you as comfortable as possible in the inner, and as uncomfortable as possible in the outer man. I know one great luncheon bar where there is a slender ledge behind a table, on which a bird could hardly perch, and yet this is sought as a vantage ground by men who wish to get a slight modicum of rest with their feeding. If you have the leisure look around and try and take count of the people; all sorts, all sizes. I am afraid some of these young dandies are rather going to the bad. They exchange glances, and there was half-intelligible allusions to 'sprees' of the night before. Many there are—an increasing number, it appears to me—with bright intelligent pleasant faces, men with whom you would like to shake hands. Then there is, but severer, a man like the old Cheeryble. You may often make a physiological study of a face. You soon pick out the lawyers; the parsons—there are not many of them—still signalize themselves at the board. There is a man, who is a 'promoter of companies'—if ever a face wore an expression of grasping selfishness, it is that face: he shows it in his way of feeding, and his history, when you come to hear it, corresponds. There is a great banker; I wonder why he is here rather than in his private room; ditto that brace of clerks from a government office. And soon, most men showing their histories in their countenances, and showing their habits by their manners.

The oyster shops form a set of luncheon bars by themselves; but there is a considerable variety on some of the counters. Pickled salmon and soused mackerel appear to be the favourite delicacies; cold hard-boiled eggs, which, I should think, would be useful, and cold sole, which seems a mysterious taste; lobsters, lobster salad, &c. These bars frequently do not serve drinks, but there is generally an immense display of aerated waters, and the waiter will get you anything you want for your money. I suppose, under such circumstances, there is a friendly sort of arrangement between the luncheon bar and the public house round the corner. It is astonishing what a capacity is occasionally developed for shell fish. A gentleman told me that he would turn in and take a cool lobster, not as a meal nor yet as a part of a meal, but as a mere whet to one's appetite. The proper thing is to take your penny loaf and a pat of butter and consume natives. The Whitstable oysters will take their price, but very good oysters at a very fair price are obtainable in the west country. I know that in the bay of Tenby—always noted for good and cheap fish—one can get oysters at three shillings the long hundred of six score, the retail price. The fish which is sold retail at sixpence a pound is sold wholesale at fourpence a pound. I should think this would be a profit, or say a small advance on this, that would fairly repay the London salesman. It is rather hard that we should have to pay a penny or three halfpence for the oyster that sells for about a farthing—four or six hundred per cent. It would almost be a due punishment to the oyster seller if the great Dando institution were revived. Did you ever hear of Dando? He was the terror of the luncheon bars of his day. A gentleman with an insatiable desire of oysters and imperfect pecuniary means to gratify the taste. This, however, formed no impediment to Dando. His idea of oysters was that of Christopher North—'five hundred in their cradles and five hundred with pepper and vinegar.' This was not an outrageous joke of

Wilson's, but a veritable fact. He could act wondrous things in his day—pour a bottle of whisky into a bowl of milk and drink off the mixture. But to return to Dando. He would have the oysters opened, dozen after dozen, and enjoy them with real gusto. The men would be kept incessantly to the work of opening oysters until that insatiable appetite was, if not satisfied, wearied out. When the reckoning was made, Dando confessed impecuniosity. It might happen that he would be sent to gaol to work out the price that way; but the irrepressible Dando would crop up again. Pleasant and courteous, he would enter some new lunch bar and order a few dozen natives. The direction, pleasant to shopkeepers, to keep on opening till further notice was given. Then suddenly the thought would flash across the mind of the unhappy shopman, 'Suppose this should be Dando!' The agony of suspense was soon ended by the certainty that that great original was before him, and had, as usual, suspended cash payments.

Yet I confess it is not pleasant to stand at a counter on a rough winter day, with a door open or ajar, or, at all events, letting in some current of cold, and perhaps sleet and snow as well. There is generally a coffee-room behind, involving some slight addition to the charge, and the waiter perhaps expects a trifle. And though our insular ugliness has nothing to show that will compare with the *déjeuner à la fourchette* which you may have for two francs at the Palais Royal, with large, cheerful rooms, sofas, and gilded mirrors, and an outlook on a broad, planted space, where perhaps a fine military band is playing, still you may eat at your leisure, like a gentleman, instead of being fed at a sort of trough, like an animal—take a glance at the 'Times,' 'trifle with the cruet,' be tolerably warm and comfortable, and in some sensible places you can also obtain spiced ale or mulled claret. And this reminds me that there are some luncheon bars where the bar is everything and the luncheon nothing. You see the announcement that it is a luncheon

bar. You enter. Drink is going on everywhere, and there is no food except hard biscuits and fossilized sandwiches. There are better places, where they profess to give you drink, inasmuch as their fluid is a speciality, but still they will condescend to your weakness if you are really hungry and would like to have a little lunch. Such is Piodéla's, in the Strand, where they sell you Spanish wines, genuine and good, iced in summer and mulled in winter. Such are the new shops which they have opened for the lager beer, in some of which you have good German cookery, where do not forget the herring-salad. It is a curious fact that the places which do a supper trade do not fall into the way of a lunch business. One o'clock at night harmonizes ill with one o'clock in the morning. They will try and make you as comfortable as possible, be civil and obliging, and all that; but the attendants are tired, the room is tawdry, the atmosphere is still overcharged. I went the other day to a place to lunch where I had had supper some fifteen years before. How quaint and ghostly those empty boxes looked, where, in those old days, with merry friends, scattered and gone, in a blaze of light and amid a gauzy crowd, we went in heartily for the wholesome oysters at sixpence a dozen. I left the bar and talked with a venerable waiter. Things were not now as they once were, he said. They closed early. The night customers became few. People didn't come there as they once did. But I noticed that there was a good deal of legitimate business going on, and perhaps the waiter, upon reconsideration, may take a more favourable view of things.

Eating our way on, we should say that the legal luncheons are of a highly - satisfactory nature. The gentlemen of the long robe have always exercised great discrimination, and have been justly remarkable for eating the oyster while dispensing the shells to their clients. They have a capital luncheon bar near the river at the bottom of the Temple. I forget the name at the

moment, but it is strictly a luncheon place, and they give you dishes in the French style very neatly. Close by you have those now historic hostels, the Cock, the Rainbow, and the London, and lower down the Cheshire Cheese. Tennyson has immortalized the Cock. A friend of mine has observed Tennyson, Thackeray, and Dickens all taking their chops in that low room with the sanded floor. N.B.—The stout is good here. I must mention with regret that at the 'London' one day a red mullet was not properly cooked, the liver and 'trail' having been lost in the process. I trust I shall never have to speak of such a matter again. Perhaps it was under the Short 'Company' management.

The West End luncheon bars have, I think, made a considerable improvement of late years. They cannot indeed cook a mutton-chop or a beefsteak. That interesting branch of the fine arts has never flourished west of Temple Bar. But they can do most other things very well. You can take ladies with you to Verey's, in Regent Street, and they will stop in their carriages and do their own very satisfactory luncheons in Oxford Street and elsewhere. I think Spiers and Pond deserve well of the community for the good luncheon purposes to which they have applied their Australian experiences. But you always lunch in a hurry at a *buffet*, expecting the whistle of your train. The Regent Street luncheon bars are extremely good. They now only give dinners at the Scottish Stores in Beak Street; but at the corner of Burlington Street the Messrs. Blanchard have one of the best possible luncheon bars. You stand, indeed, and the place is rather crowded; we hope to see it enlarged. But the system is excellent, the viands good, and you may make any number of observations, if you are so inclined, on life and character. You also get here that variety on which I must insist as essential to a well-planned luncheon bar. In the lower room of the Café Royal you can lunch luxuriously; but their continental system is rather complicated, and it requires

some experience before you can lunch both well and unextravagantly. But the happy union of economy and excellence is what we all profess to aim at. I am sure the luncheon bars will respect the wants of the public, but I wish the public

would respect themselves a little more. We might lunch in a more leisurely and Christianly fashion. Luncheon is substantial and serious, and man, the cooking animal, ought to rise to the dignity of the occasion.

RIDDLES OF LOVE.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NEW PLANET INSISTS UPON BECOMING VISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE.

YOU can guess tolerably well what Captain Pemberton said when May opened to him her new project. That a daughter of his should go upon the stage was not to be thought of for an instant. Poor they might be; but perhaps he could not help; but he would always remember that he was an officer and a gentleman, and that he had a duty to perform in saving his family from degradation.

Such model sentiments as these were just what might have been expected from the captain's training and turn of thought. He had never lived among people who understood the arts as professions, and who could comprehend the dramatic art as compatible with respectability—at any rate as far as its female followers were concerned. So when he had put forth what he considered to be the orthodox ideas upon the subject, and expressed them in properly commonplace terms, he was of opinion that he had performed all the duty demanded of him, and might leave results to settle themselves. Such was May's view of the case. But May did not quite know her father, and was especially uninformed as to many experiences of his past life. It so happened that the captain had been a constant playgoer in his youth, and had revered the dramatic stars of his time—the Keans and the Kembles, for instance—with great devotion. And it was further a fact that he had, during his earlier experience in the service, taken no small part in amateur performances,

and had been even considered an actor of more than average talents. To the stage indeed he had paid attention in more than one way, and it was not the fault of the dramatic art, if his manners had not been emolliated, and if they retained any naturally savage traits. Among the educated classes in this country, the men who have the least sympathy with dramatic art and artists are to be found perhaps among University dons and military officers commanding home districts who have not seen service abroad. Captain Pemberton was of course not likely to have imbibed academical austerity, and he was saved from the pipeclay view of such matters by his foreign service and the emollient process which he had undergone through his amusements. Hence he was saved also from any brutal excess of anger when May developed her plan in connection with the stage, and contented himself, as we have seen, by simply taking the conventional 'officer and gentleman' view of the case.

So it was that May did not experience by any means such a shock as she had expected in the reception of her proposal. She did not, you may be sure, forget Mrs. Grandison's two great ideas. The first she was as far as ever from entertaining, in the way of action; but she clung to the second as her sheet anchor—she saw that it held hope. And it was not her fault if she did not, during the next few days, familiarize her father with the idea of herself in the character of an actress. She

was a much cleverer girl than you have probably been able to discover as yet, and had a reserve of feminine determination, which, properly exercised, was calculated to leave a mere man, accustomed to the command simply of soldiers, without an opinion to stand on. Time after time, at such prosaic periods as breakfast or dinner, she spoke of herself—of course from a ridiculous and impossible point of view—as a *prima donna* bringing down storms of applause from overflowing audiences, impelled by a common impulse of enthusiasm. And the pictures which she suggested—insidiously, but not without their graphic force—of a great house full of men and women in tears or laughter, or both, with their bravas and their bouquets, and the final verdict which confers fame, was not without an effect—as the young lady was not slow to perceive—upon the imagination of the man of routine. And when she rushed about the room and made mimic demonstrations of what she would do in great situations he was evidently moved to admiration. And when she ceased suddenly in an exhibition of the kind—as if it were all play—and fell caressingly on his neck, the man used to command men became commanded on the spot by a woman, and felt what a delightful fate it was to have a beautiful and engaging daughter. I sincerely trust that all this time May was not merely improving herself in acting; but appearances, it must be confessed, were against her.

Certainly all this time, May, while calculating upon the effect of familiarity with the dramatic idea upon her father, was quite unprepared for its influence upon herself. Before that interview with Marie Antoinette—I mean Mrs. Grandison—May, though dreaming as only a young girl can dream, in vague visions of poetry and romance—had never associated her longings with any kind of reality, but fancied that her thoughts were for ever to be secret and have no relation to her actual life. But a few days passed in meditating upon the practical side of her aspirations, and undermining

the captain's position in the manner we have seen, caused a complete transformation of her own being. She was no longer the subdued—if self-possessed—young lady who had appealed to Mrs. Grandison for pupils. A new world was opened to her imagination—a new sphere in which she sought to shine as a star. She was not, of course, carried away by flattery, but Mrs. Grandison's praises had produced an effect remarkably like the operation of that process. May, for the first time, felt ambition, and for the first time a force of will which seemed the consciousness of power. If it were not, that young lady's appearance and deportment was altogether delusive; for no person, unless contemplating greatness, and quite prepared to achieve it, has a right to look so radiant and triumphant, to assume a mien so lofty and decided, and to go about the house as if the whole world—including Brompton Row—were at her feet.

All these signs were marked by Captain Pemberton with admiration not unmingled with alarm, for he thought at times that she was possessed. But a suspicion of the truth presently came upon him, and he pronounced that she was only 'stage-struck.'

'Stage-struck!'

What a ruthless word to apply to May's dream of Poetry and Romance, Admiration and Fame, visioned in a future of Fairy Land, where ardent suns and meditative moons shone over golden shores and silver seas; and Palaces Dazzling with Light, rose on the borders of Lakes mysterious in beauty; and bright beings moved about in an atmosphere laden with the strains of music and the perfume of roses; and the Brightest Being of all came to where great harmonies arose as if from a depth, and beheld before her, bathed in ineffable radiance and glittering in gold and jewels, a Gorgeous Concourse of the Fair and Noble of the Earth; who all rose at her approach, throwing her flowers, sounding her name, and saluting her with Immortal Praises!

'Stage-struck,' indeed!

Happily May had not heard the opprobrious epithet; and pending the day when her dream would come to pass she contented herself with regarding the house in Brompton Row as an Enchanted Castle, where an amiable King was under a spell cast upon him by an unamiable magician, the spell to be broken only when the Princess, the daughter of the King, should be able to light in the monarch's heart a nobler love than it had known—a love that could make a sacrifice.

As became an Enchanted Princess, May wandered about the house, leaving the few domestic details in which she had hitherto interfered to the faithful Leonora, who loved any accession of responsibility, and seemed to consider that it gave her a right to throw in an extra number of elephants and tigers into her bounding treatment of the stairs: she had an early inkling of what had passed between May and Mrs. Grandison, and a great idea of encouraging the design against the captain, with a vague notion, perhaps, that she would gain something by its success. I doubt not, however, that she was disinterested when she saw May in her radiant state, regarding sublunary things with lofty decision, and treading the earth with disdain; for Leonora loved intrigue for its own sake, and, other things being equal, would at any time prefer a plot to a straightforward course of action.

May was not disposed to make a confidant of the dependant. This the dependant could see plainly enough. But Leonora compelled a certain understanding with the dreaming girl one morning when taking away the breakfast things. Captain Pemberton had afforded the opportunity by an early departure from home.

'Let the captain see Mrs. Grandison,' insinuated Leonora to May, almost in a whisper.

Leonora disappeared immediately afterwards with the tray. But the hint was not lost upon May, who, I am afraid, was getting crafty beyond her years. So at least may be surmised from the fact, that the young lady soon after sought Mrs.

Grandison in her little boudoir, and was then and there closeted with that ornament to the stage for the space of at least three quarters of an hour.

The interview may have had nothing to do with what followed—upon that point you may form your own impression—but this I know: that on the following morning Mrs. Grandison sent up to Captain Pemberton requesting the favour of a few minutes' conversation.

You can have seldom seen a man more surprised than the captain when he received the message.

'What can the woman want with me?' he said to May when Leonora had left the room.

His daughter of course had no idea—I am afraid that May's moral tone was undergoing a process of declension.

'Something connected with the rooms, perhaps,' suggested the young lady, in an artless manner; 'there was a suggestion about a new arrangement when the month had expired.'

'I detest having to transact business with a woman,' said the captain, 'but I suppose you would be of no use, May.'

'I am afraid not, papa,' replied that young lady, quietly; 'you know that nothing that I could do would be conclusive.'

'I suppose not,' rejoined the captain—bored but amiable. 'But I have never yet seen this star of the stage, and would rather have nothing to do with her.'

'Papa, that is unkind,' suggested May, in her simplest manner; 'Mrs. Grandison is a delightful person to talk to, and you of all others would be charmed with her.'

The captain could not choose but consent to be charmed; so he descended the stairs, and meeting Leonora on his way, bounding upwards as if she were a charge of cavalry and mistook him for an infantry square, intimated to that energetic young person his desire to seek the presence of her mistress.

The energetic young person was all complaisance, and came to a halt just in time to prevent an instinctive demonstration on the part of

the captain to prepare for cavalry. 'She would take him to madame immediately—madame was in her boudoir.'

And thither the captain followed; and there he was introduced to Mrs. Grandison in due course. Mrs. Grandison was upon this occasion not merely Marie Antoinette; she was the Magnanimous Queen, the Gracious Grand Duchess, and half a dozen commanding characters comprised in one. Captain Pemberton was simply a helpless man, who could command only soldiers. He felt himself unequal to the contest that ensued. It was a pitched battle as far as forms were concerned; for the captain marshalled his forces, as in honour bound, made the most of them, and resisted the charges of the enemy with all the conventional weapons at his command. But he felt the inferiority of his resources almost as soon as engaged, and then came the usual consequences—want of confidence and rapid demoralization. The captain was but a 'smooth bore' in talk. He had an antagonist supplied with Sniders, Armstrong guns, and arms of unerring precision, which met him at every turn. So when he found himself beaten at all points he had to consider what was to be done. Running away from a lady was out of the question. He already felt the force of his antagonist's tongue, and regarding her in all the degrees of her demonstrations—the Magnanimous Queen and the Gracious Grand Duchess, Marie Antoinette, in every phase of fascination—he came at last to the chivalrous conclusion that he must yield. All was lost save honour—man could do no more than he had done.

The ultimate agreement between the high contracting parties was that Captain Pemberton consented to his daughter going on the stage, and that Mrs. Grandison promised to get her an engagement.

CHAPTER XIV.

WINDSOR'S HOTEL, AND WHO WENT TO IT.

It is possible to live for a long time in London without making the acquaintance of Windsor's Hotel. I know many persons who have passed the whole of their lives in the metropolis without arriving at this experience. If you happen to be a bishop, or a peer of any importance, or a judge of one of her Majesty's courts at Westminster, or a field marshal in the army, or even some such thing as a merchant-prince—if you happen, in fact, to belong to any class whose members are, through their years and dignity, compelled to have respect for appearances, you are not likely to be recommended, upon coming to town, to stay at Windsor's. But it is very possible that, passing the place by accident, the bishop may remember how, when an undergraduate at Oxford, he stayed at Windsor's during an occasional sojourn in the metropolis; and the temporal peer, the judge, the field marshal, and the merchant-prince—though the latter is least likely of any—may, when reminded in the same manner, recal a former period, seen through the mist of time, when they also knew the house under similar conditions. Not, however, that any former frequenters of Windsor's are known to have arrived at such great dignities or positions. The probabilities are, indeed, the other way, and I merely note the possibility to show the kind of men who were, and perhaps still are, the principal patrons of the establishment.

Windsor's is situated in a street running out of Piccadilly, not a hundred miles from the Circus, and it is a place of as little outward pretension as the most fastidious person could desire. It scarcely seems, judging by its appearance from the street, to be entitled to the dignified title of an hotel; and indeed a great part of its business is of a miscellaneous restaurant character, unconnected with residence. The latter department was developing considerably when I last saw the place; but there is a coffee-room on the

left of the hotel entrance which is assigned to persons staying in the house, though even this is shared to a considerable extent by others who have known the place in that character.

At the time of which I write—only a few years ago, as my readers will remember—the fashionable season had just come to a close, and the parliamentary session had followed it with its usual punctuality. Everybody who had not left town was leaving it as fast as possible. The double fact, however, made no difference, as yet at any rate, to Windsor's. The house was only nearly full, that was all, instead of being quite full, as it had been for some months past. For the frequenters of Windsor's were not fashionable men in the sense associated with the great world, though they were leading spirits of the little world—the inner or outer world, which shall I call it?—the only world they cared about, or that cared about them.

It was at about twelve o'clock in a day to which I especially refer, that a gentleman who was evidently a dweller in the halls of Windsor—judging from the fact that he came down stairs without hat or gloves, and in a lounging way suggestive of slippers—entered the coffee-room aforesaid, seated himself at a side table, took possession of a breakfast apparently dedicated to him, and after a growl of disgust, by way of grace, at the grilled fowl which greeted him on the removal of the principal cover, proceeded to make acquaintance with the meal.

The breakfaster was a well-dressed, comely gentleman, of military appearance—but it may save description if I say that he bore a striking resemblance to the friend of Mr. Hargreave, who had made a brief appearance in Shuttleton society a couple of months before, and it will save further trouble if I add that he was Cecili Halidame himself.

The only other occupant of the room was an older, not to say middle-aged, man, of still more military appearance than Captain Halidame, that is to say, more severe, and with a peculiar appearance

which said half-pay, as plainly as it proclaimed from the housetops. He was varying his breakfast with such literary recreation as could be afforded by one of the half-dozen Army Lists; which were the only books, except University Calendars, Racing Calendars, some numbers of 'Baily's Magazine,' and a 'Guide to Cheltenham,' to be found in the apartment.

Halidame saluted this gentleman with an unceremonious nod, and then looked round him for something to read. A few papers were lying about. He tried 'Bell's Life,' and he tried the 'Army and Navy Gazette,' he tried the 'Times' of that morning. None of these would do. He could not fix his attention, and had evidently something on his mind. Judging by his frequent glances at the door, it seemed that he expected a visitor.

This was just what he did expect, and the visitor presently appeared. He opened the coffee-room door without any previous appeal with the waiter, and came in as if he knew the house.

He was a short, thick-set man, with a magenta-coloured countenance not unsuggestive of port, nor irrelevant to cognac, nor indeed to any refreshment of the kind that might come handy. He was shaved to a miracle, and, when he removed his hat, looked, as far as his face and head were concerned, and making allowance for a few features, like a red billiard-ball with a circle of iron-grey hair around that portion of it intended to be uppermost.

He greeted Halidame familiarly, but still in a manner which indicated a certain social subservience; and an acute observer might very soon guess the relation which he bore to that gentleman—that of a kind of dependent friend, who looked after business for him which he was too lazy to look after himself.

'True to my time, captain, you see,' remarked the new comer, as he dropped into a chair by Halidame's side, and marked the business character of his visit by drawing out a bundle of letters from the breast pocket of a carefully-brushed, but not very new coat.

He was *not* true to his time, I suspect, for the captain gave a growl which distinctly conveyed such an impression.

'Well, never mind that, Hanger,' he said, hurriedly. 'What have you done?'

'What have I *not* done?' was the response. 'I have been to Benjamin, and he says he'll wait; I have been to Abednego, and he says *he'll* renew.'

Cecil Halidame gave a gasp as if relieved by these communications.

'And after that,' pursued Mr. Hanger, with a certain severity discouraging to sanguine emotions, 'I went to Jamorack, whose conduct was simply beastly.'

'Tell me, tell me!' said Cecil, with moody impatience.

'Well,' continued Mr. Hanger, 'he simply won't do anything—that is to say in the way of waiting. He says—shall I tell you what he *did* say?'

'Go on, go on.'

'He said, then, that you were a downright *do*, who never paid anybody; that he had had quite enough of your promises, and did not believe in your expectations; and that he meant to sell you up, and see what you were worth immediately. He has a judgment already, as you know.'

'Yes, yes. Go on. How about the advance?'

'Well, I'm sorry to say that Jowls is just as unpleasant as any of them. He says he'd rather not do any more in the same way, at least without another name. He didn't seem to consider mine as mattering one way or the other,' added Mr. Hanger, with a rather humorous twinkling of the eye.

'Did he mention anybody else's name?' asked Cecil.

'He said your brother's might do.'

'Confound him! As if I could ask Norman. You might have told him that my brother would do nothing of the kind—an absurd principle to stand upon, considering all the money he has *given* me,' added Cecil, evidently disgusted at the inconsistency involved.

'After that,' continued Hanger, taking no notice of this reflection,

'I went to Jorrocks; and after Jorrocks I went to Scammell, and then—'

'Well, never mind all that,' interrupted Halidame, petulantly. 'Did you do any good?'

'Devil a bit,' summed up Mr.

Hanger. 'They all say that if you sold your commission to-morrow you could not pay a tenth part of your debts, so they decline to do any business. It's rather hard, considering that the money market is so easy, and people in the City are at their wits' end for investments.'

Halidame relieved his feelings by using bad language.

'What's to be done then?' he said, savagely, and glaring at Hanger, as if the difficulty was *his* doing.

'Don't know, my boy,' said that gentleman, calmly, and growing independent, as he always did in proportion to his friend's impecuniosity.

'Upon my word, Hanger,' said Halidame, seeking an object for wrath, 'you are more annoying to me than all of my creditors put together. You seem to take a delight in my troubles.'

Hanger was used, apparently, to this kind of petulance, for he made no remark, and the conversation flagged unpleasantly.

Then there was a pause, during which Halidame finished his breakfast fiercely, as if the grilled fowl was a creditor and he was clearing accounts with him in a very decided manner. Then giving a parting taste to his coffee, which he pronounced awfully bad, he called for some curaçoa.

The last demonstration was a touch of nature which made the whole world kin—to the extent, at least, of Mr. Hanger, who sympathized with Halidame's distress as if it were his own, and partook of its solace with similar consideration.

There was a little interruption at this juncture, caused by a couple of Cambridge undergraduates who had come down and ordered breakfast, pending the appearance of which they had made more immediate demands for brandy and soda water, and bitter ale. These refreshments they consumed miscellaneously, sup-

plying the place of further excitement by indulging in a strain of badinage at the expense of the half-pay officer, who had concluded his breakfast, but was still deriving mental food from his favourite 'Hart.'

The object of their attention took the pleasantry in very good part, though he said something about youngsters, and alluded to fabulous ways in which he would make them repent if he had them as his subalterns. But the greatest fun, it presently appeared, was inspired by an absent person. The nature of the entertainment was first made manifest when the waiter entered the room with Captain Halidame's *caraçoa*.

'I say, Charles,' cried undergraduate No. 1, 'how is Grampus now?'

'He don't seem at all well, sir,' answered the waiter, with a look as if he meant to say that he was as much amused at the absent person's condition as was consistent with common decency in one of his class.

'Will he be down to breakfast this evening?' asked undergraduate No. 2, as if anxious for information.

'Can't say, sir,' said the waiter, still undemonstrative; 'but I dare say his things will be dry in time.'

There was a roar of laughter from the two young gentlemen at this response, which caused Mr. Hanger to ask what was the matter.

It turned out that Major Grampus was what the waiter called 'an eccentric gentleman,' who never got up until seven o'clock in the evening, when he appeared in the coffee-room dressed with scrupulous care, read the morning papers, partook of a light breakfast, and then sallied forth to spend the day, having previously provided himself with a couple of sovereigns—the sum was never varied—from Mr. Windsor, who had charge of his funds. He returned home at about eight in the morning, never interfering with anybody or occasioning the slightest trouble. The undergraduates, it further appeared, having been spending the evening in their own way, did not return until Major Grampus had just retired; and feeling un-

usually festive, they indulged in various practical jokes at the major's expense—the mildest of the said jokes being comprised in drawing his mattress into the middle of the room and overturning his bath upon it, and the strongest in taking every article of his wardrobe they could find—their victim at this period being undressed—and placing them for safety in a cistern at the top of the house.

There was great hilarity, as you may suppose, when these facts came out; but no suggestion was made as to any impropriety in the proceedings, which were quite common to Windsor's, an hotel frequented, as I have intimated, by young men of all periods of life. It was a chief charm of Windsor's, in fact, that the people of the house never interfered with their guests. Had one of the latter chosen to have his bath filled with mock turtle in the morning, and to take his washing soap in the form of cutlets with his dinner, he would have met with no remonstrance on account of the exceptional nature of his tastes. A jocular gentleman—usually military—would now and then come in during the afternoon and seek a vent for his confined emotions in a revolution of the entire coffee-room, obtained by piling all the furniture into a heap in the centre. The waiter, when his attention was called to the fact, never failed to restore the articles to their proper places in time for dinner, but nobody was so ill-bred as to make a remark upon the subject. Such proceedings were considered simply incidental at Windsor's. To do Windsor's justice, however, Windsor, who was as gay an old boy as any of the young boys who came to the house, put the eccentricities into the bill; not in the form of separate items, which would have been low, but no less surely for all that, for his compensations pervaded the document and distinguished it from other documents of the kind as a certain style may pervade a literary composition and distinguish it from that of other authors. In its own way you could no more mistake the fine Roman hand of Windsor than you

could mistake the hands of Macaulay or Carlyle.

Halidame and Hanger, as you may suppose, took as tolerant a view of the present proceeding as anybody else, and I dare say got their share of amusement out of it; though there are periods in a man's life, and especially if pecuniary embarrassment exercises an engrossing influence, when he does not take the same enjoyment as usual in the annoyance of other people, and when he is apt to find even the 'drawing' of a half-pay major on the verge of delirium tremens not so intensely humorous a diversion as it had seemed in happier days.

I write, of course, from the point of view generally entertained at Windsor's, where the ruling manners had the geniality and impetus of Spring; and when Spring is accustomed to have everything her own way, you may be sure that she will not be intruded upon by the more sober seasons without giving them a little taste of her quality.

The arrival of the undergraduates' breakfast—a wonderful breakfast it was in the way of inclusiveness—caused a few 'flashes of silence' in the conversation of those gentlemen, and during these pleasant intervals Halidame and his companion continued their conversation about the former's affairs. The latter's affairs, by-the-way, were in a still worse condition; but Mr. Hanger had dealt in smaller transactions, and did not aspire to the dignity of having a dependent friend to look after them. He was by profession a solicitor, but had been unfortunate, not only with his own money but other people's; had lost his business accordingly, and saw so little chance of renewing it, that for some time past he had not troubled himself to take out the annual certificate necessary for the practice of his calling. For a short period he obtained employment as managing clerk with a firm that discounted bills, or rather—as they put it—had clients who were not unwilling to give that accommodation; and in transactions of this kind Mr. Hanger was found of great use, owing to the extensive connec-

tion which it had always been his privilege to enjoy with gentlemen belonging to the services, sporting gentlemen, and gentlemen of independent position—all that large class, in fact, who find favour with money-lenders through the combination of certainly wanting money and being presumably able to repay it. But though he brought some valuable business to the office, and was worth his salary so far, it was found after a time that he had been in the habit of exacting commissions on his own account besides those allowed him by the firm. A natural jealousy was the consequence, heightened by possible injury to the character of the office; so Mr. Hanger got his discharge. He did not seek another engagement, arriving at the philosophical conclusion that a man who has no situation cannot be turned out of it, and may at least make as much money as he can. So armed with this glorious privilege he set to work, and making use of his old connections, got them accommodation whenever he could and disappointed them punctually whenever he was disappointed himself. He did not disdain any other business that turned up, in connection with companies and speculations generally in the City, and, directly or indirectly, with the Turf. He was also prepared to be agent for anything or anybody that was available, and by dint of a great deal of sharpness and no little industry, managed to maintain, with a considerable degree of respectability, his position as a ruined man.

For Cecil Halidame Mr. Hanger did not do business in a strictly business way. No commissions or per-centages passed between them. The two were very old acquaintances—Hanger said friends, by the way, and in the confidences inspired by his brandy and water—which confidences were always to be had when the brandy and water was—would tell you that he had known little Cecil since he was 'so high,' alluding to the table, and had passed his life in conferring incalculable benefits upon him and his family. The latter position might be open to question; but there was plainly a

great deal of intimacy between the pair; and Hanger was always too chivalrous to reduce any transaction between them to the level of what he called contemptuously 'a commercial transaction.' So he contented himself with working for his friend in the way we have seen, limiting his requests to an occasional 'fiver' when there was a little cash afloat—periods, by-the-way, becoming more and more rare in the life of the Hussar—and consoling himself meanwhile with the chances of his friend's society, to which was added the serene satisfaction of being entertained with gratuitous refreshments to a comprehensive extent—ranging from the premeditated dinner to the casual drink.

The undergraduates were finishing their breakfast as Halidame and Hanger finished their conversation, and the only flashes of silence were now on the side of the latter. Halidame did not seem to have arrived at a very hopeful result, for he summed up by saying—

'Well, I dine with Wyndermere to-night, and after dinner we shall no doubt have some play. Perhaps I may be lucky for once.'

'And if you are not?' suggested his monitor for the nonce.

'Well, in that case,' rejoined Halidame, rather irritated at the plausibility being taken off his remark, 'I can't be much worse off than I am.'

As he spoke there was a noise of wheels, and a mail phaeton, drawn by a pair of handsome high-steppers, was seen drawing up at the door.

'By Jove!' exclaimed Halidame, 'it's Wyndermere himself.'

The next minute the person whom he had called Wyndermere entered the room. He was a tall, handsome man, well-built and well-dressed, and a type of a person who is obviously on the best possible terms with the world, society, and himself. His face, besides being handsome, was healthy and happy, and its bright beaming effect was assisted not a little by a clear grey eye, while dignity was provided for by a fair beard, which, keeping as it

did within modest limits, was suffered to grow as it pleased. But perhaps Mr. Wyndermere's most remarkable characteristic was the impression of extreme respectability and opulence conveyed by his person and manner. It may be doubted if anybody was ever so respectable and opulent as Mr. Wyndermere looked. To be sure, he was really a rich man, having, in addition to a private fortune, the emoluments arising from a good position in that excellently-paid service, the Civil Service of India, from which country he was at home on furlough, making the most of his youth and wealth in diversions almost worthy of the days when his predecessors the nabobs used to ring the bell and call for 'more curricles.'

'Delighted to find you within, my dear fellow,' said Mr. Wyndermere, advancing with a cheerful effusion which formed a strong contrast to the anxious, constrained look of Halidame—for a man cannot think and talk for a couple of hours about his pecuniary difficulties without carrying some effects in his face. 'I have come to pick you up, if you will go with me, continued the new comer; 'I want you to help me in choosing some jewellery. I have to spend a little fortune in a wedding present to a charming cousin of mine, and want to get all the credit I can for good taste. Do come, like a good fellow; I will drive you anywhere you please after we leave Bond Street—and you have not forgotten that you dine with me in the evening, of course.'

Halidame pulled up his face into as pleasant an expression as was possible on short notice. And five minutes afterwards, when he mounted the mail phaeton, you would not have fancied that he had a care on his mind. Nobody, in fact, would have suspected, seeing this pair of particularly well-favoured and fortunate-looking gentlemen sitting side by side behind the high-steppers, that their fortunes were so widely dissimilar—that one had more wealth, almost, than he knew what to do with, and was without a care in the world, while the other was being hunted

about and indebted to the most abject devices for his personal safety, and with not much chance of preserving it after all.

CHAPTER XV.

CAPTAIN HALIDAME'S 'NEXT MORNING.'

Hanger called upon Halidame next morning by appointment. It was past eleven o'clock when he paid his visit, but the captain had not come down to breakfast. So Hanger took a chair in the coffee-room, and drew what moral he could from contemplating the half-pay major, who was sitting at the same table, and engaged apparently at the same breakfast, as on the preceding day: suggesting the idea that he had not moved during the past twenty-four hours, and had only changed the Army List, which was still at his elbow, for the 'Bell's Life,' which he held in his hand, having found the eloquence of Hart a little monotonous during the long vigils of the night.

The undergraduates, like the captain, had not yet descended to their morning meal, owing probably to a further exaggeration of festivity on the previous night. But the charm of their society was not quite lost to the hotel; for they might be heard from time to time bawling from distant and facetious parts of the house for seltzer and brandy, accompanying their orders with sarcastic remarks upon the inefficacy of bells, the professional shortcomings of waiters, and the moral obliquities which they observed in the character of the landlord of the house.

Their party had been increased by the presence of an ensign, temporarily released from the defence of his country at Chatham—a gentleman of tender years, but unusually vigorous views of life, who had not, perhaps, passed his drill, but was evidently 'in a mood to chide the thunder if at him it roared'—or when it did not roar, for the matter of that. His remonstrances at the tardiness of attendance, made from the top of the stairs, suggested the idea that the waiter had come under

the displeasure of the Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant-General at least; and they were always made upon the ground of disrespect shown to the army in general, accompanied by cutting allusions as to the probable consequences of similar conduct pursued at the mess of the speaker's particular regiment. So I need scarcely say that the ensign was a cheerful addition to the society of the place.

'Captain Halidame is not coming down but will see you upstairs,' said the waiter, presently entering the room and replying to Mr. Hanger's message.

So Mr. Hanger ascended to a room on the second floor, where a spectacle awaited him which few men about town could have beheld without emotion.

There was nothing the matter with the bedchamber, which was a pleasant apartment enough, spacious, and rescued from some of the gloom inherent to a thorough sleeping room by the introduction of looking-glasses on the walls, and articles of general furniture, indicating that it might be made habitable by day as well as by night. But its occupant—he was a sad spectacle indeed.

Captain Halidame was still in bed; and if any gentleman disinclined to get up wanted a lesson as to possible appearances under such conditions, he would be able to draw any amount of moral from the spectacle which presented itself. Few men look well when they stay in bed in the morning. Even when they have retired to rest early the night before, and wake up in a room with open casements admitting the fresh air of the country, the songs of birds, and all the welcome noises of nature, they have at least but an invalidish air about them—granting, too, that they are themselves in an average state of health and contentment. But when they wake from their slumbers in a London room, with no trees, and nothing but house-tops visible from the windows; no sounds coming therefrom but such as come from London sparrows and London cries; and they are themselves in a jaded state from late

hours and excitement, and have troubles on their minds besides of a secret character, they are no enviable spectacles to the most envious of their friends. So thought Hanger as he looked upon the prostrate Halidame, and saw from his friend's appearance, as he afterwards said, that there was a great deal more the matter with him than usual.

Cecil Halidame—the handsome, the gay, the caressed, the spoiled child of society, and the beloved of beautiful women not only in Europe but in Asia—looked about as pleasant a spectacle as a gentleman who is going to be hanged. Seedy would be a very mild and ineffectual word by which to describe him. He was pale and worn, dishevelled and distressed, and, you might well suppose, despairing. He looked, of course, all the worse for want of that attention to the business of the toilet without which we are none of us presentable for many hours together; but there was no mistaking the fierce passion which had taken possession of his face, in which was exhibited alternate emotions of rage and what seemed something like remorse.

As Hanger entered the room Cecil roused himself, evidently glad to be relieved from his own society.

'I am very pleased to see you,' he said, with a sad smile. 'I am in a very bad way this morning, Hanger, and shall bore you awfully.'

Hanger smiled too—rather grimly. He was not unused to being bored by his friend, and rebelled at times; but he was always good for Cecil's service in case of real necessity, and might be counted upon like a man's mother when nobody else will come near him.

'I am afraid it's all up with me,' pursued Halidame. 'You know what a hole I was in yesterday. Well, that was a state of prosperity compared with my present condition. I must leave London immediately—England, I fear—and even if I join my regiment in India I don't see how I can escape. Common creditors I may keep off, but card debts will follow me; and the end must be that I am bullied out

of the service—out of society—out of everything,' he added, in a tone of despair.

'Then you were unlucky last night?' suggested Hanger, coming to the point.

'Unlucky!' groaned Halidame. 'I ought never to have been such an ass as to tempt my luck. But I will tell you all presently. Reach me some more seltzer and brandy.'

Halidame had been already partaking of the restorative in question, as was indicated by an empty bottle and a tumbler by his bedside. Hanger took another flask of the effervescent drink, which was placed in reserve upon the table, and with the aid of some cognac, also in waiting, prepared a fresh draught of 'the mixture as before' for his sorrowing friend.

Refreshed by the restorative, Halidame told his tale. He had dined with Mr. Wyndermere the night before, at that gentleman's club, and had played at whist afterwards until a late hour. The club was not remarkable for high play, but the work had been warm upon the occasion in question; and Halidame, after losing the few pounds which he had in his pocket, had been cleared of three hundred in addition, which he had neither in his pocket nor elsewhere.

'I have nothing to complain of,' he added, with rather sorrowful candour, 'in the conduct of any of the men. Wyndermere is no gambler. He plays but seldom, in fact; but when he does play he doesn't care how high the stakes are, and loses as contentedly as he wins. I doubt if I lost much to him last night. In fact, he was my partner several times, and, I fancy, did little more than clear himself. I owe something to him, but the greater part of the three hundred to a couple of other men. I did nothing but lose, and of course inflicted my bad luck upon every man who had the misfortune to cut in with me. We were not many hours playing, too; but you may lose a great deal at shilling points and five on the rubber, if shillings are understood to be sovereigns, and you bet besides.'

Mr. Hanger was not able to con-

trovert this position, and assented to it with a sympathising groan.

'The question is,' continued Halidame, 'how am I to pay these men? You know how little I have at Cox's, and the chance I have of raising the money from the rascals I have been using for so long.'

Mr. Hanger was obliged to be acquiescent in this particular also, and could only attempt a few words of consolation. He was blundering out these when Halidame rose in his bed, and cried aloud in an exulting tone, as if visited with sudden inspiration—

'I have it, Hanger. I will square with them this very day. I had forgotten all about it. I have property to dispose of.'

This was news to Hanger, who, after a glance at his friend in order to determine if he was mad or not, and deciding in favour of his sanity, made the practical remark—

'Well, in that case it's all right.'

'Yes, I have property to dispose of,' continued Halidame, rather fiercely, as if somebody was disputing the fact; 'and you, my boy, shall go and realize it.'

'Delighted,' replied Hanger; and he really was as pleased as a man could be at the promised relief, though rather puzzled at the sudden communication.

'Take my keys,' said Halidame, with the air of half command that he assumed towards Hanger when it so pleased him; 'look, they are upon the dressing-table.'

Hanger went to the dressing-table with disciplined obedience, and took the keys, which were beside his friend's watch. As he did so his eye caught an unaccustomed object.

'Surely, Halidame,' said he, 'you are not spending your money upon rings just now.'

'The ring there—ah! how it recalls yesterday,' replied Halidame, bitterly. 'Wyndermere gave me that. He made me go with him to help him choose about five hundred pounds of jewellery he had to give away. I gave him my advice, and he gave me that. I thought it a handsome present at the time—this morning it looks like a sarcasm.'

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The ring was a matter of no consideration in the main matter, and Halidame continued his instructions to his faithful dependant.

'You've got the keys. Just open that despatch-box on the drawers. Have you done so?' Halidame, as he regained confidence, got abrupt.

'All right,' was the submissive response.

'Well then,' pursued Halidame, 'turn out all those letters and other papers, and down at the bottom you will find an ivory box—a carved Chinese affair—give it to me, like a good fellow.'

Hanger made the search as requested, and handed a beautifully carved Chinese casket to his friend.

'You will find a key that fits it on the ring,' said Halidame; 'give it to me.'

The ring was presented. Halidame selected the key, and was about to apply it to the box, when he started, as if with some sudden emotion, and said abruptly—

'Never mind; you will see the thing when you get to the jeweller's. There is the key. Go, like a good fellow, to Golconda's—I think that will be the best place, as they know me, and saw me about so late as yesterday. Go to Golconda's, I say, and sell the thing for what you can get—you will get, I dare say, as much as I want.'

Hanger began to think that his friend had gone crazy; but as a prudent man he did not express such an opinion; so, after receiving instructions to pay away the money if he received it, and making an appointment for a meeting in the course of the afternoon, he went forth upon his mission.

Cecil Halidame, left to himself, felt the relief which comes to a man when he has met a cause of anxiety by a decisive step. It was a painful one, for he was disposing of property which he was evidently ill-disposed to spare; but it would help him out of his present difficulty, and that was all he dared to think about. His thoughts truly were not pleasant companions. Yesterday he was bewailing his fate as the victim of tailors, bill-dis-

counters, and army agents with whom he had overdrawn accounts. He was ruthlessly dunned, he was being sued at law, and he was even in danger of immediate arrest. But his difficulties, though great, were at least of an ordinary character. The contest with men of business was at any rate fair fighting, and Halidame did not dream of there being any harm in keeping such people out of their money as long as possible, with just a little risk perhaps of never paying them at all. It was the rascals' business to wait, he considered, and in this peculiar branch of industry it must be said that he gave them a great deal of employment. If waiting can be considered an active operation, they need never have been idle.

Regarded, then, in this philosophic light, his condition yesterday was one of positive happiness compared with that in which he found himself to-day, when philosophy could be of no avail against the actual fact. Still, as I have said, he had a feeling of relief; and he had long since learned from experience that familiarity with misfortunes of most kinds, like familiarity with danger or physical pain, produces the same effect that familiarity with persons is said to produce—by a particularly vulgar and lying proverb.

Perhaps it was this feeling of relief that made Halidame dress himself with peculiar care, and pay attention even to such additional decorations as the little bouquet for his buttonhole which he found ready for him on the dressing-table—supplied by regular arrangement with a fashionable florist. Perhaps it was the same feeling that made him luxuriously and even festively inclined, and mentally determine to try and make up a party to go and dine at the Star and Garter. But there was just a little desperation in his state of mind, and his head was not quite settled after the wine and excitement of the previous night; and he had that vague sense of impending calamity which comes over a man on the morning after excess, so that his condition

may be easily accounted for. What he felt to want was a thorough change of scene and society, to distract him from his own thoughts. Female companionship always had upon him the effect of a stimulant, and brought his mental powers into play; and he felt disposed to dissipate in this manner by paying visits at the pleasantest houses he knew. But on the other hand he dreaded restraint, and required to be among people to whom he could talk to please himself rather than to please them. To a great extent, you see, he did not know what he wanted; and it was precisely in this mood that after a phantom breakfast—it was not much more corporeal than a cup of green tea and an anchovy toast—that he sallied forth from Windsor's into the world.

CHAPTER XVI

THE 'NEXT MORNING' BRINGS AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

It was 'a confoundedly fine day,' to use the words of the half-pay major whom Halidame left brooding as usual in the coffee-room. That officer always spoke in insulting terms of Nature when she happened to be in a better humour than himself; but upon Halidame the weather exercised its legitimate influence. Beauty in any form never failed to raise his animal spirits. A pretty woman, he had been heard to say, had in a few minutes the effect upon him of a pint of champagne, and got into his head, as I have hinted, in much the same manner. He fancied rather too frequently that she got into his heart also; but the latter process is not effected with equal facility, and the fact is very fortunate for a great many of us, who would otherwise find the residence in question encumbered with too many tenants. The head is a much safer seat for the affections, and a little excess there cures itself in a very short time. There is no need, however, to moralise. All I meant to mention was that Cecil Halidame, being a little disturbed in his head, expec-

rienced probably a languid sense of some luxurious ideal—a vague sentiment which sunshine and flowers would be sufficient to satisfy—and that the bright weather exhilarated him accordingly. He felt the sunshine in his blood, and his thoughts transported themselves to the beauties of nature beyond the town, with just a little more attention than usual perhaps to beauty of another kind which passed him from time to time, and induced him, by force of association, I suppose, to commit the frailty of looking at such things as bonnets in shop-windows. To tell the truth, he felt light and frivolous to any extent, and very much in the mood which leads a man of his temperament to find a resource—failing any other—in going about purchasing jewellery, gloves, perfumes, and all sorts of foolish and feminine things. All this, I dare say, sounds very sad; but I am obliged to write of Captain Halidame as he was, and not as he ought to have been.

Seldom has a gentleman, even 'about town,' passed a less profitable hour than that passed by Cecil Halidame while meditating, or rather dreaming, of what he should do for the day; his only engagement being the one which he had made with Hanger in reference to the financial affair. He did not care to go to his club; he had not seen a morning paper, and took not the smallest interest in its possible contents; and the questions of the quidnuncs would have driven him to distraction.

It is recorded of a statesman of past times that after ten minutes or so of provocation he once seized a bore by the throat and shook him violently, declaring that 'human nature could endure it no longer.' Such would have been the inevitable fate of old Colonel Proser at the hands of Halidame if that harassing officer had asked his usual question of 'What do you think about Russia now?' Major Buttonhole, who told people that he was kept awake all night by the Emperor of the French, and had always some fresh plan for dealing with that inscrutable monarch, would

scarcely have escaped with his life. Little Tattle, who told everything about everybody in private life, and a little more, if possible, about everybody in public life, and had usually a reserve of scandal about crowned heads, would have fared better; for he usually killed his victims for purposes of self-defence by talking them into an abject state of idiocy.

With a keen appreciation of the powers of Proser, Buttonhole, and Tattle, and those of others who, in a military club, would be certain to talk military shop, Halidame's instincts told him that the place was no place for him in his present state of mind; so he wandered without purpose about the streets, and disported himself in the frivolous manner I have mentioned.

He did not indulge in the little extravagances to which, as I have said, men of the kind have a tendency under similar conditions, for ready money, as has been profoundly remarked, is a great check upon the imagination, and credit, as we have seen, was not Halidame's strong point just then. Not that he would have cared much about the disposition of his immediate resources—I mean those in his pocket—for as he said of himself, 'he was always an expensive fellow when he was hard up,' and did not see the advantage gained when disbursements suggested themselves instead of waiting to be suggested, by having five pounds about him instead of having nothing at all. So a dinner or lunch *de luxe*, or any object of similar importance, seldom became a matter of calculation with him; and with the smallest prospect of fair pecuniary weather, he was always found sailing with the breeze. He would have indulged his tastes a great deal more, I dare say, but for the rebukes of his friend Hanger, who ventured, in his capacity of confidant, to be a stern monitor at times, and, having what may be considered a selfish interest in Cecil's hotel extravagances, did not scruple to condemn the employment of ready money for other purposes as 'diverting expenditure from its legitimate channel.'

Only in one instance did Hali-

dame, during this 'next morning' of his, depart from the sturdy principle laid down by his friend. While ungratefully killing time which spared him under somewhat severe provocation, he happened to examine the pictures in the window of a photographer in Regent Street, regarding with pardonable interest the portraits of lovely ladies in piquant costumes which the theatres seem to have legitimatised as objects of public attention, when he remembered on a sudden that he had a commission to execute at some place of the kind on the part of a no less important person than himself.

The fact was, as soon transpired when he made known his requirement to the shopman, he had been carrying about with him, for more than a couple of months, a photograph *carte de visite* in an envelope, and as envelopes under such conditions are likely to wear out and look ugly, if they do not get lost, and are at best but a mean receptacle for a possible treasure, Halidame bethought him that he would like a case of some description more worthy to hold the contents. As he wished to have the picture fitted in and protected by glass, he was naturally obliged to produce the work of nature and art in question; and as the photographer's assistant had to seek some mechanical means and appliances for the purpose, the latter was obliged to take the case and its contents away with him to the upper part of the house.

He was absent ten minutes or more, during which time Halidame prowled about the place in a high state of impatience, and but ill-disposed to be amused with the interesting objects which courted his inspection on the tables and walls. The man came down at last, looking apologetic and somewhat perplexed.

'I am very sorry, sir,' he said; 'afraid you will think I have taken a liberty, but really did not intend. Fact is, sir, I left the picture on the table while I went to get some cement, and a lady who is having her portrait taken took up the case and looked inside.'

Halidame did not wish the picture to be seen by strangers, but he

would not resent so trifling a freedom on the part of a lady, so he merely answered hurriedly—

'Well, I suppose you could not help it, and no harm is done, I dare say. Give me the case—I am in a hurry.'

'Well, I must tell you, too, sir,' said the man, 'that the lady took the picture, saying that it was the portrait of a friend of hers whom she wished to find out in London, and she positively refused to give it back until she had seen the gentleman who had brought it. A young gentleman who is with her—a young officer who has had his regimentals sent here to be taken in—said she must not detain the case or send any message about it to a stranger; but she said she didn't care, and would do precisely as she pleased; and the officer said well, he couldn't help it.'

'And I dare say he couldn't,' said Halidame, amused despite his annoyance at this piece of feminine persistency. Then a sudden idea struck him.

'It is not—not the lady herself?' he asked. 'You did not recognise——?'

Then he paused, remembering that the original of the picture was not quite the person to disport herself in such dictatorial style. And the man, too, quickly answered—

'Oh, no, sir, not the least.'

'And do you know the name of the officer?'

'Manton, sir; Ensign Frank Manton,—th Royals—saw it on his uniform-case.'

Halidame did not know the name, and was not pleased to stand confessed as the possessor of the portrait to a stranger; but there seemed to be no help for it, especially as the man added—

'I don't think you will get the picture, sir, unless you will not object to go up stairs, for the lady is rather—rather arbitrary—if I may say so, and orders the gentleman about. I think she must be his cousin, sir.'

Halidame did not quite see the sequence, but decided to go and claim his property.

The portrait-room was, as usual,



Drawn by Adelaide Claxton.]

MRS. MANTON TELLS 'ALL ABOUT IT'

[From 'Rattles of Love,' p. 101.]





at the top of the house; and there, arrayed in Her Majesty's immaculate scarlet, and sitting in an arm-chair, with his head screwed into a piece of machinery which gave him the appearance of awaiting the extraction of a tooth, sat a gentleman of martial bearing beyond his years and stature. In the farther corner of the room, looking at some pictures, stood a young lady whose first appearance conveyed the impression—justified by subsequent examination—that she was very decidedly dressed, and might have gone to a fancy ball as an epitome of 'the period,' as far as female costume was concerned. She turned as she heard the sound of footsteps, and revealed the merry eyes and delightfully-dimpled countenance of Miss Lucy Cartwright.

Halidame was pleased besides being relieved, though for a moment—as if a sudden recollection had come upon him—he seemed agitated, and his face wore a painful expression.

The latter signs seemed, however, unobserved by Lucy, who raised a cry of genuine pleasure, quite unjustified by the extent of her acquaintance with Halidame—but you know what a gushing thing she was.

'Miss Cartwright,' said Halidame, advancing and extending his hand, 'this is an unexpected pleasure.'

'And I am very glad to see you too,' she said, frankly; 'but you must not call me Miss Cartwright.'

'Well, Lucy, then,' said Halidame, who was never wanting in affability to a lady, and fancied that she must have taken more interest in him than he had supposed, when at Shuttleton.

'Oh, that will never do,' said the young lady, giving her words a few bars of accompaniment with one of her musical laughs; 'that will never do. What would you say, Frank?'—appealing to the young officer, who had been posed by the photographer and was afraid to move, and did not seem prepared to venture even upon using his tongue. But without waiting for him the fair speaker added—

'You must call me Mrs. Ensign Manton.'

This declaration forced a remonstrance from the constrained gentleman in the chair.

'Do for heaven's sake say Mrs. Manton, without the Ensign,' he said, imploringly.

'Oh, I didn't know,' she said, naively; 'I didn't know, until you told me, that it wasn't right. I won't do it again—will that suit you?'

The fact, however, if not the form, was one for congratulation; so Halidame was all congratulations accordingly.

He had said several pretty things and was improvising several more, when the photographic artist entered with his materials, and after duly warning the sitter proceeded to arrange the focus.

'Come into the waiting-room with me, while Frank is being taken,' said Mrs. Manton—I hasten to give her her new name—'and I will tell you all about it.'

The helpless sitter glanced, rather anxiously as it appeared, at the retreating forms of his wife and Halidame, and I dare say was not quite pleased at the indefinite extent which the young lady's confidence proposed to take. But the artist at this instant begged him pathetically to look at a nail in the wall, and he came to 'eyes front' accordingly.

In a proper state of civilization people would have their photographs taken, as they have their teeth, under the influence of chloroform. The diversion caused the ensign to look remarkably foolish, and the photograph, as was afterwards found, was an unfortunately faithful resemblance.

Mrs. Manton had just time to tell 'all about it,' to the extent that the match was a runaway affair, and that the happy couple were, in consequence, on the worst possible terms with their respective families; that she supposed the said families would come round one of these days; and that, in the mean time, it did not matter, as she had her own money that nobody could interfere with, and that he had his pay, which wasn't much, to be sure;

with a few interesting particulars of a similar kind—when the other high contracting party to the arrangement, being released from bondage, joined them and gave a temporary turn to the revelations.

Lucy—Mrs. Manton sounds very formal—introduced her friend to her husband in due course, and the two gentlemen took up the conversation as well as they could. There was another interval of absence, however, on Mr. Manton's part, for he had to divest himself of his uniform and make himself presentable to the public before leaving the place; and then Lucy became once more characteristically communicative.

Yes, it had been a case of elopement, and admirably managed on both sides. For Lucy, under pretence of paying a visit of some weeks at the house of a schoolfellow a few miles from home, had managed to get away with all her personal baggage, a triumph which obviated a great many romantic difficulties incidental to occasions of the kind; for, as the young lady remarked, 'Going away without one's things may be very pleasant in a poem or a romance, but must be very disagreeable when the heroine sets up in private life. What, in fact, is she to do for want of them? Oh, no; we did not ride off in the young Lohcinvaz's style; that would have been too absurd; we simply met at the railway station, and went off quietly, having made our arrangements beforehand to be married—in quite a legal manner, you know, so that there can be no question on the subject.' The latter assertion was made with a great air of dignity.

It appeared, too, that the happy bridegroom had managed matters quite as prudently, having obtained the necessary leave, and made his exit from Shuttleton *sans peur* and *sans reproche*, and, you may be sure, not *sans* baggage.

There was one little element in the arrangement that was less romantic, perhaps, than could be flattering to the pride of the adventurous pair. Nobody pursued them. The fact seemed slightly humiliat-

ing, but less so when the circumstances are explained. Neither of the families of the high contracting parties knew of the affair until too late to interfere with practical effect; both lady and gentleman being absent upon authorized grounds. They were very happy, Lucy added, though they were at present 'cuts' with their families; but that, she seemed to think, was rather an advantage than otherwise at first, as it left Frank and herself all the more independent.

It did not take long to tell all this, and Halidame had time to ask a question or two, which he did with a strange agitation.

'Your absence from home,' said he, 'explains something for which I have vainly tried to account. I addressed two letters to you at your father's house, asking you the address of Captain and Miss Pemberton, who, I learned, had left Shuttleton very suddenly. I had occasion to make a very important communication to—to them—and I had hoped for your aid in finding them. Both letters were returned through the post-office, with the intimation of "not known" on the covers.'

'Oh, I dare say,' said Lucy; 'my father was furious, and would not take any notice of me. Of course my acquaintance with Frank was short, and of course he has not much money. But I always hated the idea of long courtships, and think a fortnight quite sufficient, and as to my father's objections on the score of money, I thought to myself, "I dare say somebody will leave Frank a fortune one of these days, as they did me, and besides he will get promoted, and colonels and generals, you know, are always well off;" so I thought to myself also, "Papa may go, and mamma may go, with the rest of the party to Jericho—to Jericho, to Jericho, to Jericho," and all the rest of it—you know the song.'

Halidame had a weight on his mind which his meeting with Lucy had increased; but he could not choose but laugh at her confidence in the prospects of an ensign, with nothing but his pay and on bad terms with his family, in connection

with the rank of colonel or general, to say nothing of the purely gratuitous contingency of coming into a fortune. But he soon came back to the question which he could not help asking, but almost wished to avoid.

'And you do not,' he asked, 'know where Captain and Miss Pemberton are to be found?'

'Of course not,' was the answer; 'and that was why I kept the picture, considering that its owner was sure to be a friend of hers, and would probably know. And that reminds me. How did you come by the picture? Did May give it to you? May was not in the habit of doing things off-hand, as I do—though you and she were great friends at any rate—were you not? I have my suspicions, however, about the picture. I missed one from my album the day after the ball at the Town Hall, and I suspected at the time that you purloined it when you called that morning. Tell me, sir, was it so? If you say yes, I will forgive you, and make you a present of it, that's more. You have it already, however, so I need not trouble myself.'

Halidame, who had indeed the case in his pocket, admitted the impeachment, not wishing to have his attachment to May made a matter of comment; and more on that ground, I suspect, than because the accusation happened to be perfectly well founded. I have omitted, by-the-way, to state that May was the original of the photograph; but that you may suppose from Mrs. Manton's remark.

And while talking of May Lucy did not fail to tell Halidame of the reason of the Pembertons' departure from Shnttleton—the loss of the necklace, and the captain's determination to pay her father its value. 'The sacrifice,' she added, 'was quite unnecessary as far as I am concerned, and had the matter rested with me I would never have permitted anything of the kind. For the thing was my own property, and the money my father received for it was no more his than—than I am,' she added, for want of

a simile, and choosing one which was not quite inappropriate.

'I fear,' continued the girl, 'that the payment has embarrassed them. I fear, in fact, that they are poor; and I am therefore more than ever anxious to find my dear friend May. But what could I do? Frank joined the regiment a few days after the ball; and then we had that fortnight's acquaintance; and then—you know the rest. But, Captain Halidame, what is the matter with you? You look like a ghost. Here, take a chair. Men don't faint, I suppose; but, here, do take my bottle of salts.'

Halidame was really only a little short of the condition in which Lucy supposed men do not get.

'I am a brute,' he said, bitterly, recovering himself with a desperate effort.

'Oh, yes!' said Lucy, resuming her light tone when she found there was not so much the matter as she had feared; 'most men are brutes, you know; but surely you have not been false to May. You have not jilted her, sir?'

'No, no, I have not,' gasped Halidame; 'but I have still much to reproach myself with. Do not ask me to explain. I must not—I dare not.'

'Ah! perhaps your parents are against it also,' cried Lucy. 'Well, in that case, why not do as we did—run away? and then the thing can't be helped. Oh! but I forgot, you can't find her to run away with. Yes, it's very sad. I pity you both.'

Here Mr. Manton rejoined his wife and friend—quite prepared, doubtless, to find that 'all about it' had been told as far as he was concerned, and not feeling, probably, quite so dignified as he would under more mysterious conditions. Not that he was wanting in outward signs of being one of the most important persons in the three kingdoms. His appearance was somewhat feminine, though his colour was dark, and his stature was approaching to the reverse of grand. So by way of compensation he cultivated an imposing manner, and assumed airs of command with

everybody but his wife. For the rest I may mention that he was clad in immaculate mufti, and had that peculiarly neat appearance, as far as costume was concerned, which suggests that its wearer passes a great portion of his life in a bandbox. That he was not without courage and cleverness may be guessed from the fact that he had not only dared to get married at so early a period of his career, but had managed to accomplish the object under the difficulties we have seen.

Halidame was about to take his leave when Lucy was struck with an idea.

'Frank,' she said, good-naturedly, 'Captain Halidame wants somebody to take care of him to-day. Why not ask him to go with us to Richmond?'

I am not sure that Frank was so charmed with the idea as Lucy; but he was prepossessed with Halidame, as most people were, and looked up to him, moreover, as his superior in service rank, and a cavalry man besides. So he at once asked Halidame if he would not drive down with them and dine at the Star and Garter.

Halidame reflected for an instant. Curiously enough, his head had been running upon the Star and Garter in the morning. Why should he not go? he asked himself. He could join his friends somewhere after he had met Hanger. So he said yes—he should be particularly pleased.

'All right, then,' said Mr. Mantton, with a frankness which he cultivated as a recognized characteristic of camp life. 'We have several places to go to, but we will pick you up at Hyde Park Corner at four, if that will suit you, and drive over Hammersmith way in time to order dinner.'

It was then three, near the time

when Halidame was to meet Hanger, and the arrangement suited him very well. So he saw his friends into a brougham which was at the door, and envied them their happiness as they drove off.

The meeting with Hanger was to take place at Long's, where Halidame had contemplated giving his useful friend a dinner later in the day. Before Halidame had gained Bond Street he had fought a battle with himself, and, as he considered, won. When he entered the coffee-room of the hotel he found Hanger punctual to the appointment, and he feared that estimable gentleman considerably by addressing him fiercely with—

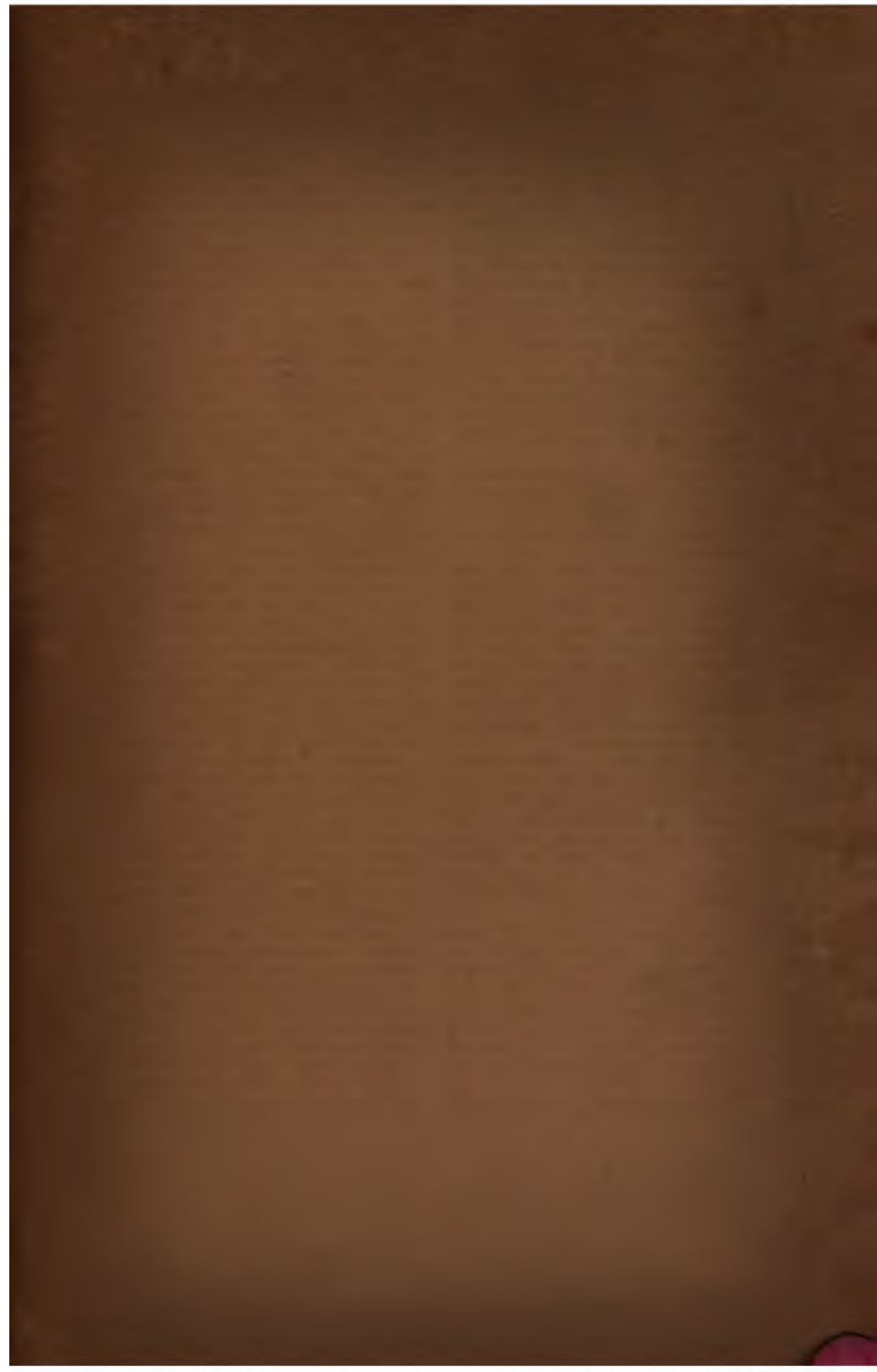
'If that infernal business is not already done, do nothing in it. I have changed my mind.'

'But it is already done,' returned Hanger, considerably surprised. 'I sold the thing for the sum you wanted, and paid the money according to your request.'

Halidame denounced his fate with such vigour of advocacy as to deceive himself; and after a few minutes of the exercise he came to the conclusion that he was an injured man. Nothing is more consoling than such a conviction when the previous belief has been the other way. Whatever might be thought of what he had done, considered this subtle self-examiner, it was clear that it had been done against his own wish. This was a grand discovery to an accommodating conscience, and, combined with a glass of curaçoa, raised his moral tone so considerably that he was quite in form for the society of the Mantons, whom he met, as arranged, at the 'Corner' of the nearly deserted Park.

Hanger had expected a festive dinner at Long's; but disappointment is the badge of all his tribe.



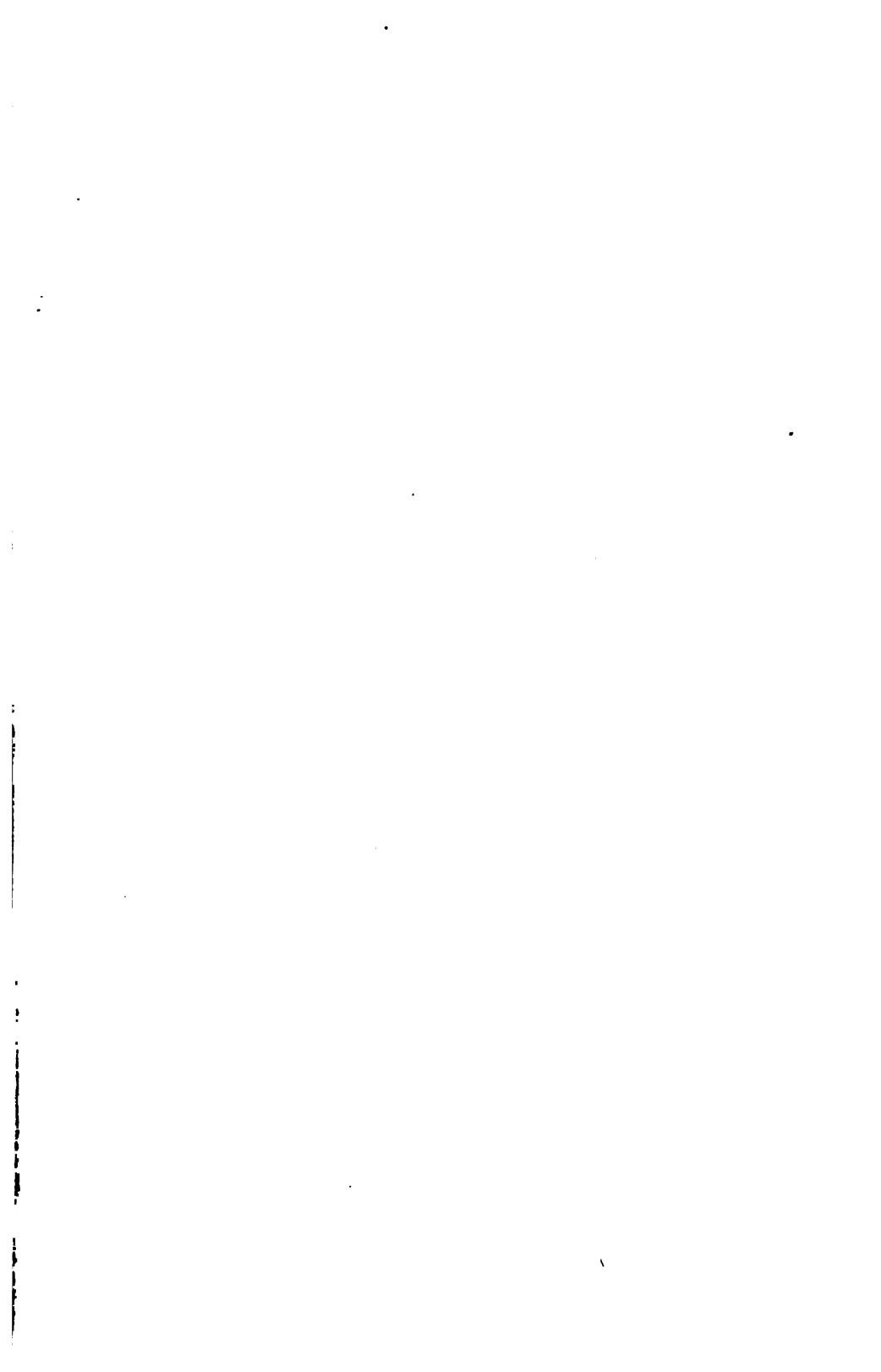




Drawn by H. FENNELL

WHAT SONG SHALL IT BE?

[See the next page.]



WHAT SONG SHALL IT BE?

WHAT shall it be? What song
 Will win your fancy, dear,
 And move your heart to sing
 As mine is moved to hear?
 Shall it be gay or sad—
 Bright as the linnet's strain,
 Or full of unshed tears
 That deaden life with pain?

I touch the keys and wait,
 Watching those dreamy eyes,
 That hide their thoughts, as stars
 Are hid in bluest skies:
 No furtive flash betrays,
 There is no tell-tale gleam,
 Help me, then dear, to try
 And read your waking dream.

Say, shall the song be ripe
 With summers of the past,
 With rosy blossoms shed,
 With sunshine overcast?
 Shall scenes and sounds that were
 In pleasant memories strong,
 And song give life again
 The days when life was song?

Shall sadder fancies find
 An echo in the tone,
 Till we are moved to weep
 O'er sorrows not our own?
 Or shall heroic deeds
 Move us to fierce delight,
 As when a clarion thrills
 The pulses of the night?

Shall laughter bubbling rise,
 Like streams that seaward go,
 And, prodigal of life,
 Wrestle to overflow?
 Or 'neath a deeper spell,
 Say, shall the music move,
 Stirring the hearts of all—
 Shall it discourse of love?

Ah! dreamy eyes, that hide
 Their secret thought so well,
 A burning cheek reveals,
 A silent lip can tell.
 What need to ask the strain
 That youth to youth will bring?
 Love it has ever sung,
 Love it will ever sing.

W. S.

LADIES IN THE TEMPLE.

THE philosophers prevail. Ere long may be expected the last edition of Mr. Mill's 'Subjection of Women,' with appendix, like the dying speech of the 'Morning Star,' informing the world that its mission has been accomplished. The municipal franchise is a fact. An unchivalrous revising barrister and an unimpressible Court of Common Pleas refused the parliamentary. But it cannot long be denied, and Miss Lydia Becker still survives. Like the mother of the Gracchi, she watches over the education of her children. The youthful Amazons of the North are under her guardian care. They crowd the lecture-theatre to hear the young gentlemen from Cambridge discourse on history, on metaphysics, on conic sections. They metaphorically gird up their loins for the good fyfte. Ladies plead their own causes in England and in America. Miss Shedden exacted the attention of those much-enduring law lords for—not days, but weeks. Miss Josephine Hutton, at Montgomery, Alabama, defended herself against a judge who sued her for fees. She did not believe there was an honest lawyer in the country. The American courts have decided that a lady may disport herself not only in 'pantalettes' like Dr. Marie Walker's, but in the short cut-away coat of a man. Woe to the unhappy policeman who dared to arrest the lady in breeches!

But the sweetest news which e'er has greeted the Beckerian philosophers is now wafted over the Atlantic. Mrs. Arabella A. Mansfield, A.B., of Mount Pleasant, Iowa, twenty-four years of age, and 'a lady of strong mind,' has been called to the bar, and authorized to practise law in the State of Iowa. Her husband was called at the same time. According to all rules of politeness she must take precedence of him. What more touching picture than to see husband and wife together in a cause! But how calmly she could snub him, after the manner of leading counsel here, and show her

superior tact and knowledge. Fancy them on opposite sides. What field for the vent of private pique and jealousy! How Mrs. M., with her keen feminine appreciation of Mr. M.'s weak points, would double him up and turn him inside out. The situation may be at times perplexing. When little family matters require the attendance of Mrs. M. in other places, what is to become of her unfortunate clients?

Since Dr. Marie Walker first favoured us with a sight of her inexpressibles, ladies have entered our medical schools, and placed demonstrators of anatomy in a sad quandary to know how to keep profanity from their ears. In a well-known debating society in this very city ladies take part in discussions, even upon subjects hitherto hardly to be openly discussed by men alone. Why should not Miss Becker go to the bar? Oh! ye Templars, beware! Think of the Princess and her college; of that Bohemia which Thackeray has so well described—Bohemia no more when the austere morality of the new régime has scourged and purified it. Shall that noble hall, where Prince Hal was wont to meet worthy Sir John Falstaff, be shared with the followers of Ida? Those venerable stalls in your ancient church, which none but old women in male attire have been permitted to occupy—shall they be devoted to petticoats? Can you yield your gallant right of being the escort of the ladies who resort there? Must the fragrant herb, the flagons of ale, and the nameless mysteries, be banished from your precincts? And the gardens where Charles Lamb used to wander as a child, which Spenser and Shakespeare have immortalized by the mere mention, where Johnson, Bozzy, and Goldsmith loved to stroll in their manhood, and where now green grass and green trees flourish in the heart of the modern Babylon—shall your sole dominion of them become a thing of the past? There are other dangers. Addison tells of a member of his club who

was placed in the Temple to study the laws of the land, and was the most learned of any in those of the stage. It is the competition of the ladies you have most to fear. Not even the change of the company of the green-room for that of your law-books will avail you. But it is not to discuss the question whether the Temple shall be filled with ladies who don the wig and gown, or Westminster Hall with Portias, that we write. It is of a more cheering subject; of woman in her womanly sphere; of those who are undefiled by the nauseous doctrines which would destroy even all that remains of chivalry.

In one of his greatest novels, Thackeray advises ladies to go to the Temple Church, 'not for the admiration which you will excite and which you cannot help, but because the sermon is excellent, the choral services beautifully performed, and the church so interesting as a monument of the thirteenth century, and as it contains the tombs of those dear Knights Templars.' And notwithstanding the slanders which a modern author has imputed to what he is pleased to term 'the moral atmosphere of the Temple,' the ladies do flock there in numbers. Charles Lamb calls the Temple 'the most elegant spot in the metropolis.' Modern criticism is perhaps less favourable, but there are few places more interesting to ladies. Wherever men congregate there they love to follow. When they go to the Temple many of them satisfy a curiosity similar to that which takes them to a Zoological Gardens—to see the animals, and how they disport themselves. Those who truly enjoy a visit to the Temple are the ladies fresh from the country, to whom a barrister *simpliciter* is an object of interest—an interest which has not been destroyed by frequent intercourse or intimate acquaintance. There is no more pleasing duty performed by the resident Templar than that of escorting such ladies. When the service is over he shows them round the church, points out the tombs, and distinguishes the early Norman from the later architecture. Draw-

ing upon his imagination when his knowledge fails him, he replies to their countless interrogatories. From the church it is but a stone's throw to the gardens, and on the way the new Hall of the Inner Temple is passed. On a fine day, even in November, the gardens are pleasant; the chrysanthemums, tended with a care almost equal to that bestowed on Saintine's 'Picciola,' are bright, varied, and still monotonous. Around the ample square are the different buildings. There is Paper Buildings: monument of a Justice's going to bed sober. In a dim court not far away, in the corner of a fourth floor, are the chambers once occupied by a now celebrated judge. If report be true, how often has he there been imprisoned for days—weeks—afraid to stir out, because of the duns who almost lived on his stairs. Then the Middle Temple Hall is visited, left open as it indulgently is for the service of the ladies on Sundays. The pictures, the busts, the screen, the armour (ye relics of Wardour Street), the shields on the panels, in the windows—all have to be explained. The arms of many of England's greatest judges are here. In one of the windows in the middle of the building are the shields of the two greatest Chancellors of modern times: between them, illustrating true English flunkeyism, that of the Prince of Wales. Could not even the benchers be spared ornamental associates? Was the Middle Temple chosen because of the notorious subservience of its benchers in the reigns of the Stuarts? Then there are the long oaken tables and benches where the barristers and students dine during term. The ladies see the gilt on the gingerbread—'Oh, how nice to be a barrister!'

Next comes the proposition that they shall visit chambers. Papa has secret doubts of the propriety of their so doing; but the young ladies are determined, and they have their own way. If they have never seen our Templar's chambers before their fancy has pictured a fine set of rooms overlooking the gardens. Their idea of staircases is derived from

the gorgeous ones of City magnates, or buildings built by companies of limited liability. They leave the Hall and the gardens, and pass through a labyrinth of courts. Most of them are dingy enough, and the ladies ask solicitously, 'Does any one *really* live here?' Having made a complete tour of the Temple, to return within a few yards of their starting-point, they arrive at a court which the Templar announces to be his. It is a small square court with buildings four stories high on all sides. Looking up towards the sky is like looking up a coal-pit. You may almost see the stars in the daytime. The ladies seem appalled: they begin to think their friend is not such a swell as they had fancied. They examine the names on the door-posts. One reads: 'Mr. Robinson—that's yours.' 'Mr. Smith—Oh! I know a Mr. Smith who's a barrister—I wonder if it's the same.'

Robinson leads the way upstairs. Of all the wretched staircases in the Temple, his is the worst. The whole pile was condemned to demolition in 1844; but it stands there still, and probably will do until it takes the law into its own hands, and tumbles down. The ladies are peering about as they go up; at the names over the doors; at the open outer doors, which they don't quite understand, unless, perhaps, they have been at Oxford or Cambridge. One, two, three stories: surely they are to go no higher. No. They stop at the third landing, before a very ill-looking door, with the inscription over it, 'Mr. Jones, Mr. Robinson.' There is a plate on the door about messages and parcels: the ladies must read it. There is a paper pinned on the door, and one reads, 'Mr. Robinson and clerk at Westminster; apply opposite.' Called on for an explanation, Robinson admits that he was not in town the day before; and that as for the clerk, he has only a limited interest in him, and that he is always opposite.

The doors being opened, they all squeeze into a passage about two feet wide, and thence into the front room. 'Oh, what a charming little room!' 'What a contrast to those

awful stairs!' exclaim the ladies. They are reassured, and feel much better satisfied. In five minutes, if they know Robinson pretty well, they have peeped into every nook and corner of the room. They caress the flowers in the window. They admire the photographs on the wall. They were not sure at first whether they dare look at them, but a glance convinced them they were not ballet-girls or dames aux camellias. They look over the books on the shelves, and think there's very little law amongst them. Even papa discovers there only one or two books of which he disapproves. Books which Lord Brougham somewhere says, mothers keep from their daughters, but which daughters love to read in secret—Rousseau's. Robinson has to explain that he has another room, where he keeps his law-books, and promises to show it to them after luncheon. They continue their voyage of discovery round the room, and inquire about his rifle, his fencing-sticks, his boxing-gloves. Then one opens the piano, plays a few notes, and rapidly skims the music. She wonders what Robinson wants a piano for—he who cannot play at all. If the visitors should be sisters, not mere friends, no place is sacred. They open every unlocked door or cupboard, and long to know what is there when a lock resists them; they go into his bedroom, examine everything, in the hope of finding out something—what, none of them know. A mystery attaches to men living in chambers. They possibly think they may find the key to it in the cupboard, or behind the curtains. But no; there are no tell-tales. There is certainly a slight smell of tobacco; the wonder is it is not greater. There is a range of pipes, a few drinking-pots; these, with the implements already mentioned, and the mysterious piano, are the only indications of habit or occupation. The furniture is well worn, but good. The ornaments on the chimney-piece are pretty and tasteful. There is an absence of useless show. Utility seems to be the order of the house.

Luncheon is on the table. Every-

thing 'is cold; for there is no cooking on Sundays in the cook-shops which supply the inmates of the Temple with breakfasts and luncheons. They sit down, and fall to with a will. Robinson has to fill the double character of host and waiter. Laundresses in the Temple (the women who attend to chambers are so called) have a holiday on Sunday after their morning's work is over. The tablecloth is clean; so are the napkins; so are the knives, forks, and glass. The ladies discover that at a glance. Then commences a fire of questions. They want to know who attends to the rooms; who she is, where she lives. If, to pique their curiosity, Robinson merely answers their questions, without explanation, they are quite perplexed. Who is this who does all this; *is she old or young?* This is the question they wish to solve, and it is one which they find difficulty in putting. Though at last they may be satisfied that laundresses are not unlike the witches in Macbeth, ladies cannot feel pleased with them. They are the rivals, who make men so comfortable in their chambers, that they become first indifferent, then perhaps actually averse to matrimony. The luncheon is good: the ladies like the champagne; papa the port. Then Robinson shows them his own peculiar way of making coffee. They cannot help laughing at him, as he carries about the little can, puts in the coffee, plants it on the fire, and in a few minutes produces an excellent cup of coffee. They sit and chat over their coffee, or one of the young ladies plays on the piano, or sings. At the same time, from the opposite side of the court come floating other strains. Robinson's wrath is aroused. He tells them how, when he was a student, and was reading for an examination, the same man tortured him from morning until night with an everlasting 'Home, sweet home.' The time passes so pleasantly that they

have no idea of the hour when papa declares that they must go. First, however, they have to see the business-room. There they see the law-books which they were so curious about: they open one, peep into it, and think it looks very dry. Then they look at the papers on the table, and think that Robinson must be doing a good business; but he confesses that they are dummies, mere decoy-ducks. He tells them of his one brief, which came when he least expected it. It was in the hot weather; he had had some friends to luncheon, and all were going down together to Kingston to row. Robinson lay on the sofa in his flannels, without coat, smoking a pipe. A knock came to the door, and in came a clerk with a bundle of papers, amongst the tobacco and the ale-pots. He says he is convinced he never got another brief from the same quarter on account of this contretemps. The ladies must see him in his wig, so he is obliged to robe. Then they try the wig on, and if Robinson is spooney upon either of them, he regards that wig with peculiar fondness ever afterwards. They descend the stairs, and are shut out of the Temple; but as they wend their way westward along the Strand, the thought perplexes the young ladies—'What does he do with a piano?' Had they only had courage to put the question, it would have been solved as easily as the others. Robinson could have testified how many a manly voice had been heard accompanied at that piano; that ladies do not enjoy a monopoly of the love of music or the power of producing it. He would have told that music constituted one of the charms of the merry meetings in his chambers, and, had he been candid enough to own it, that many of the pleasantest evenings of his life had been spent at his bachelor parties, ungraced by the presence of 'ladies in the Temple.'

G. W. H.



POPPIES IN THE CORN;

OR, GLAD HOURS IN THE GRAVE YEARS.—No. XI.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE,' &c.

COLLEGE FRIENDS.

I HAVE but a flower or two to gather for the completion of my handful of Poppies. Indeed, since I began to bind them together, two summer-loads of the bright scarlet flowers have been carted away; two poppy harvests have been reaped and garnered. Garnered? Ay—but only by the warm winds that passed over their array, fluttering the banners of the corn, and while the spears bowed all one way, rising again in a stately swaying when the vehemence of the attack had passed by, the brown land between the stalks was paved with the flakes of crumpled scarlet. Lightly come and lightly gone, frail petals that gave pleasure for an hour, and then the wind wafted them off, or they loosed hold in the serene heat of the July afternoon, and who remembers them any more for ever? So with these unsubstantial, idle annals of glad hours that long ago bloomed their brief while, attained the zenith of their brightness, and then passed, passed quite away, except for a petal or two treasured between the leaves of the book of memory, and looked at now and then in a leisure half-hour. Taken out now, indeed, and set out in a rude representation of the old live blaze of colour and motion; but only to be glanced over by half-indifferent eyes, and then fluttered away again into disorder and forgetfulness, like those oracles which the Sybil used to arrange, written all on light leaves, stirred and disarranged by the least rustling wind. They served their purpose, told their tale, and then the winds might have them at their pleasure. So with these reminiscences, put together with some pains, lightly read, however, and lightly dismissed. Complete we, nevertheless, our gathering, even though at the very next moment they be cast in the dust to die.

College Days and College Friends. Surely these should have a place among any bringing together of glad hours out of the sober years. Glad hours? Ah! looking back upon them, that whole three years seem as it were a field of flowers. No doubt it was not altogether so; and much grave work and many thorny anxieties really mingled with the brightness and gaiety of those light-hearted days of life. No doubt the scarlet tinge that seems to colour the whole hill-side comes from that distant side-view that brings or seems to bring together blooms that, however growing more closer than perhaps at any other time of life, were yet stragglers;—single spies, and, it may be, battalions:—yet with tracts between of serious growth, of barren land.

Still, still,—how, to one looking back, the old days, the old Oxford days,—how they seem to laugh out of all the graver acreage with the illusion of being one great sheet of flowers! We forget the weary working through the day, and far into the night; the manful resistance to the seductive band of bronzed and flannelled men that burst on some warm morning into the room, bent on recruiting for that scratch game at Cowley, that eight down to Nuneham; we remember not the overmastering anxiety as the time drew nearer and nearer for that awful half-hour in the School Quad. before the door shall open, and crowding men hurry in, white-tied and lily-livered, eager to be sitting at last face to face with the worst; the dreadful suspense in some cases until (as the case may be) the Class-List is out, or the solitary room entered and the scarcely-hoped-for but gaspingly-welcomed slip of paper is brought: magic slip, changing in a moment the hues of the landscape of the mind. All this is forgotten; 'the very schools ap-

pear to smile,' as we stand upon some hill-top of life, and, shading our eyes with our hand, look back upon those pleasant 'days that are no more,' the days when we were not soldiers, nor lawyers, nor treasury-clerks, nor anxious curates, but simply 'Oxford men.' The days when love's young dream, and fascinating uncertainty, and tempting newness made life a kind of unreal fairy-land for us, and our brows were not knit with anxious thought at finding how Noel and Alban and Eric all want new coats and trousers and shirts and boots, and will soon have to be sent to school; and how Violet and Daisy and Lily and Rose must have new best frocks, 'for the children are really not fit to be seen, if they should be asked out anywhere.'

But in the Oxford days we were of those provided for, and not of the providers; what little 'cutting the coat according to the cloth' had to be seen to, applied not to the necessities, but to the luxuries of life; and if (which is by far the best training for a young man) the ingenuity had to be directed rather to the problem of *what we could do without*, than of *what we wanted*—why surely there was little hardship in this. Cosy provision of bed and board, many a not-too-expensive mode of enjoyment; society from which, if really the best, a slender purse never shuts a man out; delightful alternation of joyous Vacations and happy Terms,—flying Terms, we might well esteem them; flying fast, even when we were of them;—all fled now.

Oh, yes! what life like the Oxford life, for freedom from care (if but the coming Schools have had their due), for lightness of heart, for enjoyment of friendship? 'I envy you,' said a man in life's prime, to me going up new to Oxford. And I could almost say the same to others now. Yet not so really:—rather it is that I love, I sympathise with the fine young fellows; so able and willing to enjoy life, gathering the flowers by handfuls, never noting (so thickly do they grow) how the petals detach themselves and flutter earthward still as the flowers are

picked. Gather away, I would say, with all my heart; enjoy keenly, vividly, appreciatively, the glad and merry Oxford months. Only go up with a grave determination (not leaning on the broken reed of your own strength, however) to do your duty by God and man, to others and to yourself, to enjoy all innocent gratifications that bend within your reach, only letting alone the boughs of forbidden fruit—and how glad those Oxford days may be! Sweet to enjoy, and sweet to remember; the very self-denial becoming ere long part of the enjoyment; how different at the time and afterward, if guilt and extravagance were engaged as purveyors of the delights that would have been far more exquisite and truly delicious provided by innocence and frugality!

'Why should we fear youth's draught of joy,
If pure, would sparkle less?
Why should the cup the sooner cloy
Which God hath deigned to bless?'

Remember, among the new friends, *the old folk at home*: the hearts so anxious (ah, say not *over-anxious*!) with love that, after all, is *tried*, which, as yet, the new devotions cannot be. Remember also, while you pluck the present day, not to be laying up distresses, perplexities, miseries, for those future years which lie beyond the bright three-years' strip of University life. Gather blithely, with full hands, the bright flowers;—but not so as thereafter to strip your life of them. Oh, be happy! yea, be happy, in this sunny gleam of life;—but make sure that that is happiness that you are following.—For there are mirages in the desert, and it is bitter to come, after eager running, upon nothing but parching tracts of sands, instead of those cool wells and palm trees, which indeed the heart desired, but to which really the back had been turned all the while the deluded pursuit endured.

Well, well, I can find a white hair or two on my head now; so you shall have listened deferently to me (gracefully, as young men can, refraining from showing impatience) thus far. And now I am minded to retrace my steps, and to lay aside the M.A.—even the B.A. garb; and

to become once more a fluttering-gowned undergrad.; to slip off the cares of a parish, and to be simply weighted with the light burden of the next coming examination; to vacate my curate's house and garden, and to become the proud possessor of 'rooms,'—rooms in that staircase which was, as it were, a comb with many cells of bees—cells stored with honied delights; combs easily set all a-buzz, you may be sure. Rooms that I even yet grudge to any other possessor; ah! what intruding fellow, I wonder, is in them now? and what work or what merriment is going on there while I am mentally establishing myself and my belongings in our old place again? Nay, the process should be easy; for I am writing on that very coffee-table which was so often drawn up near the fire from its recess; and beside me lolls the very easy chair from which long legs of this or that Oxford friend used often, in the old days, to stretch nearly across the tiny room.

And, moreover, I am minded, for half an hour, I say, to banish that absorbing nursery, and to admit no bonny boy or dainty maid into that inviolable den (how different now, that they may be shut into my study for two hours at any time, in the very midst of busy writing or close reading;—for two hours, represented under the wretched fallacy of 'a minute or two,'—and I not dare to leave them or to complain!); I am minded to spirit away for the hour, the smooth young brow and the 'lips' young red, and the hair's young gold;—and to stand free of the extra carefulness, free also of the far more exceeding joys which they have brought, in their invasion of my home and heart.

And the *placens uxor* shall be the wilful, teasing girl of those days, making life a delicious worry; and the clerical hat shall be the straw with the college ribbon about it: and the grave array of Tertullian and Chrysostom, of Jeremy Taylor and Andrews, of Hooker the Judicious, of Waterland, Sanderson, and Bull,—give place to the shades of Homer and Cicero, of Tacitus and Aristotle, with always that

select shelf in which three green volumes and one purple made up the 'Tennyson' at that day; and into which Wordsworth had lately entered, and Matthew Arnold only just, and Robert Browning was represented but by two volumes of 'Men and Women.'

And so I am an Undergraduate again. I dare say there are Churchwardens and Parishioners (possibly aggrieved, because they can't make the poor parson dress like Old Bogy to preach, or because order and beauty are taking the place of slovenliness and baldness in church and services)—I dare say there are such things as these about me, nay, I suppose I am a Parishioner myself. But little am I concerned with them: Easter Vestries have for me no terror; sexton, clerk, and ringers are no anxiety to my mind, nor do I wince under the grave disapprobation of that one severely impracticable Parishioner who possesses the intolerable grievance of being compelled to let the clergyman decide concerning moot points in conducting the service, instead of himself being requested to arrange all those matters after his own tastes and imaginings.

All these things have, for this hour of uncurbed fancy, nothing to do with me. I am an Undergraduate again; nay, a Freshman; and this is,—yes, this is OXFORD; and the dream of many years is at last accomplished—the dream that once seemed hopeless of realization, and that seemed quite given up; I am face to face with the grand and venerable City, the Beautiful City of England; yea, she has taken me under her wing, and I am, for the next few years, to be one of her children. All that delight, all that experience, lies before me now,—which is, indeed, now behind me; I have those friendships to begin,—which, in truth, were old friendships long time ago: I have those studies to resume, which also, as a fact, have some time back nearly passed out of my head again. I have come up to Oxford later in life than is usual; but only, I think, therefore more appreciative of everything there, the work, the play; above all,

the life at Oxford; the life as a whole; the life in its details. The realization, at last, of a hope now some time relinquished, makes that even the scarecrow garment known as the Commoner's gown, is dear to me and worn with pride. No need for injured proctors to pull me up for draping my arm with it, instead of letting it flutter, like a tattered banner, from my back. No fear, for me, of that crushing sarcasm dealt, in such a case, by a well-known Brassenose Proctor upon some unhappy youth thus carrying the gown, but wearing the cap: *'I say, young man, the gentleman to whom you are carrying home that gown wouldn't like you to be wearing his cap, you know.'* For my part I loved and love the garb.

From which point did I first see my dream-city? Well, it matters little; for there is no good point of approach to Oxford now. You used to enter, I believe, by the coach, over Magdalene Bridge, and for a long time, as you came, you could see the grey and ancient towers and spires appearing out of the rampart of groves and gardens which skirt the city. Green meadows stretched, somewhat flat, about your road, but your absorbed mind was fixed on the stately panorama which stretched before you. There was nothing to take your attention away from it; nothing to jar the harmony with which your mind was preparing itself for the first visit to the august University. It is not so now. This entrance is nearly spoiled by the crowding growth of new red-brick cottages, that has sprung up about the town since the building of the railway. True, they cannot altogether spoil, although they do greatly mar, the effect of Oxford seen as you approach it for the first time. The tall Towers and Spires look out grandly into the distance, above the ring of upstart little huts, and gather their gardens round them, and fold their feet in their trees.

There you see them; Magdalene, St. Mary's, Merton; venerable, grey, and calm, seeming wrapped in their own abstraction from the hurry of our petty life; the noisy trains, the fussy engines, the long stations, and the

mushroom growth that surrounds them. They look out straight into the distance, and perhaps from their height do not see, or scarcely notice, the impudent and glaringly new pigmy-gathering at their feet. Many, very many years can they count, since their foundations were laid; and these many years have thus softened their tone, and hushed their new stone into that soft, delicious, almost solemn grey. As many years have stepped into light and died away in the shade, since those towers were new, as the little red cottages can boast weeks.

Winter;—and the snow has picked out their chancelled tracery and mossed their pinnacles with perfect white, and danced past them in a drift, and lit on them in a blinding eddying confusion, and died from them in many drips, and passed away before the Spring. Spring;—and ('tis an old, old tale) the year was of course again and again full of grand schemes, and lovely imaginings, and delicate blossom fancies; and the rush of leaves, and the burst of flowers, and the flood of song hardly kept pace with its glow and energy and impulse.

But then the Summer came, and, with it, sobered, quiet thoughts. That wild young ardour that must go on, and on, from that which was just attained to that which was future yet;—that touching each step in the ascent, hardly to pause for any enjoyment of the opening prospect, but merely to gain a fresh spring for the next;—that wild impetuosity, that ever-fresh planning, that vehement beginning to carry out the perfected designs, that quick casting them aside for newer schemes, that restless joy in the race, and exultation in the mere gladness of motion and advance;—this had died away. A check, a sadness,—a calm rather, had come upon the year. Something had been attained, not all, no doubt, that the first eager onset had designed,—blights, insects, ravages of wind and drought and sorrowful rain had thwarted many a designed perfection—nay, reality had stopped far short of the brave dreams of the young year's ardour. But it had

grown older now. If it gave up, somewhat reluctantly, the attainment of those old grand visions, it had learned that their fulfilment is forbidden to earth. And something had been attained: something of beauty; something of usefulness;—and thoughts of the *useful* were gradually edging into the mature year's mind, where only a wild profusion of blossom and beauty had been wont to crowd. And the year was content, in its Summer, to rest and dwell in what had been done and won. There might dwell a hush over it; and something of a sighing might whisper among the full heavy foliage in the summer evenings, at the missing that old wild, headlong joyfulness; but the thought passed away again from the faded blossoms to the maturing fruits, and the sadness became little more than becoming gravity, and the quiet only that of retrospective contemplation. And so the Summer passed by.

And Autumn came, while the ancient Buildings looked on unchanged, and now indeed 'an overmastering graveness rose, and the fields and trees seemed thoughtful in their absolute repose.' The summit had been gained, and after a pause full of omen, the decline had come. The old Towers could well have foretold this, but they knew, by experience, that the young year would never have believed them; or they held their peace, not in contempt, but in a loving forbearance. The fruit and the harvest were gathered in, and some return, in the fuller leisure of later life, of the old yearning after mere beauty came upon the year in its decline. Rich colours it tried now for the old delicate tints; and dressed up the grey time-worn turrets with gorgeous drapery of scarlet and madder and rose; even it began to essay some timid return of frail profitless blossom here and there. But a cry arose of Winter coming, and it cast down its garlands just when begun.

Yet some beauty still was found; for—

Naked trees had got snow-foliage, soft, and feathery, and bright,
And the earth looked dressed for heaven in its spiritual white.*

Oh, if it might be even thus for every one of us, when the Spring's rush of life is over, and the Summer's grave earnest has given place to the tender sadness of Autumn, and this again to the pallor and sleep of Winter's Death!

But now, what have the four seasons to do specially with Oxford buildings and Oxford days? I don't know; they properly belong to *Thomson*, no doubt; but I was thinking of the changes which those grave old towers have seen. And perhaps I was thinking more of the life of man on which they had looked down, and of those eager Spring feelings which are so ardent and irrepressible in the younger denizens of the grave old buildings; and how much less of achievement we settle down upon in our mature years than our glowing thoughts had designed in the pressure of life in those old generous days. So many blossoms there were; nay, it was a certainty that they could not all set, and it is something if not all were abortive, and if, now Summer is passing, and Autumn here, and Winter hard by, there be something to show at life's end, for all that gay promise at its beginning.

Watch on, ancient Towers of Oxford, over the upstart red-brick pigmy growth at your feet: watch on, like a true and wise Conservatism over a spurious and false (so-called) Liberalism! Watch on! We live in an age of change—an age when it is a sufficient plea, with some minds, for the destruction and pulling down of old and tried fabrics, to urge that they *are* venerable, ancient, proved. Down with the grey stones and the lichen-starred walls of Oxford, and up with the new brick and plaster!

And so let us help on the glorious day when our grand old England shall become a vile copy, on a smaller scale, of Young America. Let us help on the day when, the 'education of the world' having been completed, and the Bible kicked after the Prayer Book out of the domains of education, and the

* When the fogs had passed away,
The wide lands came glittering forward in a
fresh and strange array;

parish churches turned into lecture-halls upon matters of 'science,' falsely so called; and the College-chapels into gymnasiums for the pursuit of muscular Christianity;—and a stopper thus effectually placed on Popery and Puseyism (the two alone evils of our age):—the golden age of man may at last commence, and the gates of a certain Dominion appear to have prevailed against a certain Institution. Yet it is decreed that they shall prevail never. Words are ringing in my ears that seem curiously apropos to this train of musing: 'And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgement shall sit, and they shall take away his dominions, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

But I have stood in a brown study too long upon Magdalene Bridge. Let me pass on, lingering at my favourite points in the glorious High Street; looking with reverence at any man in academicals; crossing the road with prudence to avoid a man with a huge black cheeseoutter on his head, who *may* be, for aught I know, the Vice-Chancellor, but who *is*, I afterwards ascertain, a Bedell. Let me catch, as I walk to my brothers' rooms, the charm for the first time of that jangled harmony of bells, tinks, and clangs, and clongs; as though the air were full of bell-notes swarming. But first the tall straight tower of New College grows disturbed and anxious in its mind, and anon two bells, after a little fidgetting, alternate clearly and sharply; the Cathedral, awakened by the challenge, replies in a minor key, and deep-voiced Magdalene makes mellow answer from her sentinel Tower, while a clamor-

ous following of well-meaning little bells from other Colleges trying to assert themselves, hardly reach the sublime by contrast with the dispassionate calmness and melancholy sweetness of the tall Warders of the City. For a quarter of an hour these speak and reply, and are they return to their meditative belfry silence, I have passed, with the white-robed procession, into exquisite Magdalene Chapel.

The dim quiet light; the rich carven oak, rimmed with crimson cushions, and dark against the white garb of the boy-choristers; the tapers that studded the hushed, mellow gloom, and that spread their influence in a misty gold glow throughout it, catching, in the roof where the dimness loved to linger, the stone ribs that overlaced it; the deep, long, sonorous 'A—men!' of the choristers, that fell, as the fall of a long-poised wave, when the sustained voice of the prayer ceased; and, upon all these, the mighty burst, as of a forest's roar, falling into low liquid flute-notes, as from a hid bird in its shade—of the superb organ;—all these, making one indescribable whole, and rendered by associations and the long un hoped-for attainment of a life-desire, intensely fascinating to me;—were well-nigh too much for my stoicism. Then came the Anthem, and out of the harsh brazen crash of the 'trumpet sound' pealed out the sweetness of the boy-voices, clear as the ring of the descended hammer amid the fierce uproar of the forge. Whereupon a strange mist gathers across the eyes, and a sudden choking starts up in the throat.

Ah, well! it is one of the things—I am free to confess that there are many—which I cannot understand; the repugnance which the English mind is so long in overcoming towards beauty in the services of the Church. It is not as though they did not appreciate taste and fitness in the arrangements of their own houses, but, presto, beauty, richness, fitting symbol, become an offence in that House, whose comeliness should be the most cared for in the whole place. I am

not pleading now the cause of fantastic excess, and hybrid Romanism; but that of simple beauty and fitness; ay, and, where desired, of a certain richness and gorgeous ritual even. But it is (or was, the absurdity has much died out) almost funny to hear it said (as I have really heard it said), that flowers were out of place in a 'Protestant' church; and to find a parish in an uproar because the clergyman appeared in his pulpit in exactly the same garb which he had been wearing, with no offence given, during all the rest of the service. It is, I say, almost funny to be told that it is Popish for the choir to appear white-robed, most like the choirs (we seem to gather) in heaven; or that the very same hymn may become Romish if we sing it walking, which was stanch Protestant so long as we stood still to sing it. Yet these funny things *are*, or have been, said or shrieked at some much-enduring parish priests.

Poor men! it never seems to strike our grave and virtuous Censors of the Press—in those interesting Articles (I nearly forgot the big A!) in which our duties are so kindly mapped out for us, our shortcomings commented upon with due severity, our obligations set forth with admirable simplicity (for they appear merely to consist in the adapting everything to the taste of everybody in the parish, excepting to our own),—it never seems to strike these astute layers down of the law, that the clergy are to have any tastes, feelings, preferences, at all, or any good reason for possessing these, supposing that they have them. One of the brightest ideas, gravely treated with approval (as a step in the right direction) in a 'Times' Leader, which yet, at the same time, showed up the absolute absurdity of the notion;—one of the brightest of these ideas was that which had dawned into some clergyman's head—all in a fine frenzy with the laity-worship of the day, or else brimming over with the impulse of a practical joke;—wherein he proposes a plan by which a committee of laymen should control and regulate the manner of conducting the church services in

each parish; but that all *they* proposed might be veto'd by the clergyman, all *he* wished, stopped by the laymen; and, should these happen to agree, the result of the deliberations of both, extinguished by the bishop! At least thus the 'Times' made it out.

Poor parish priest! we often hear talk of that '*monstrum horrendum, &c., cui lumen ademptum*,'—the Aggrieved, Parishioner, (does not my heart quail as, 'to the mind's eye, Horatio, he stands before me?); but who ever heard a word said about the aggrieved (with a small a), the aggrieved Parson? It seems to me that a book might be written, very pathetic and moving, concerning the pains and penalties that he hath patiently and unmurmuringly to endure, especially if it fall to his lot to have first to stir up the mud of a place stagnant for some sixty years. Truly he will soon be in bad odour. Nay, hear the pathetic tale! I once heard of a worthy man who had to undergo an attack of small-pox, thereby melting the heart of his really kindly, but ready-to-be-aggrieved, parishioners—before he dared put his choir into surplices. When he was getting better, his wife informed me, 'he thought the people would be sorry for him, and not like to object, so he put his choir into surplices!' I own I was tickled at the idea: I found myself calculating what it would take—Asiatic cholera at the least, I concluded—to make them submit to vestments and incense, if he should take a turn that way.

Poor parish priest! I repeat. But be it understood that I am not advocating the cause of those dishonest men (they are, I believe, few and far between) who, really holding all or nearly all of the doctrine of a Church against whose errors the Church of England has plainly declared, yet remain in her communion as shepherds of her flock, with the avowed intention of betraying her. I cannot see why Rome should necessarily have all the beauty with her erroneous teaching, and England the baldness and the ugliness *because* she holds a purer faith. Of course if it came

to this, that purity in doctrine were incompatible with beauty in externals, nothing more could be said. It is just this, however, that I emphatically deny. I remember having it told me, with some triumph on the part of the narrator, that Mr. Meenwell had exclaimed, on being asked his opinion of certain rich work contemplated in a church in which his son was to officiate, 'I mean the ornament of *my son's* church to be the Gospel!' I could not help mentally asking, Why, in either case, should one of these beautiful things necessarily shut out the other?

Nor, when I advocate certain improvements above the category of absolute decencies—luxuries, rather; matters of *preference*, but not matters of *principle*—would I speak a word for the blind folly that would force upon an uneducated parish things, desirable, it may be, but indifferent, to the overturning of things of far greater importance. The spiritual interests of the people are of greater moment, undoubtedly, than the introduction of a surpliced choir. On the other hand, some may urge (and truly) that, in its degree, a surpliced choir might help towards these deeper interests, assisting reverence, making the service heartier, more attractive. And that you can't make omelettes without breaking eggs.

Where was I? Ah, yes,—at Oxford; and in Magdalene Chapel. I seem to have been, as Bunyan has it, in a muse. However, I find the service over now. The last 'A—men' has left the lily-carven oak stalls, and fled to the roof, and the choristers, pure-garbed, lead the way, followed by the hoodless Demies, and these by the white-robed Fellows, scarlet-hooded. Then the visitors linger or follow; and at last we group in the ante-chapel;—best for the hearing the out-voluntary;—and the long shafts of the straight columns rise up, splitting into long veins over the roof; and the organ-tide is let loose among us.

On it comes, shaping its volume into the 'Hallelujah Chorus,' flooding us in the dim light;—surpliced Fellows, dark-robed strangers—

ladies, azure or crimson clad;—and the scene, and the associations, and the Master's master-piece, so sublimely given; now shattering into dispersed 'Hallelujahs!' now gathering its might together; now sinking into an angel's solo of rests' acme, and passing away with ranked voices, as it seemed, from different angel-clusters that unite at the close;—all this was a thing to hear, to witness, if but once, and never thereafter to forget.

But in the chapel the lights went out, one by one, beneath the surly janitor's hand; and while I watched these falling stars, the music sank to low tide, leaving the sands of silence bare; and we streamed out of the narrow chapel door, into the High, under the elms again.

Whither shall I wend me next, in these semi-detached Oxford reminiscences? To my favourite Magdalene walk? to familiar Christ Church meadows? to the sedate Groves of St. John's?

Nay, best follow the ancient custom and regular sequence of the place, and, after chapel, wend my way by lanes, and through two grey venerable Quada, to that brother's rooms, who awaits me, a little impatiently, to fulfil my engagement and come with him to dine in Hall.

He is capped and gowned as I enter, and we—Do I bore you, amiable reader? Nay, if your University career be yet future, even the mildest platitudes concerning it will find you breathlessly interested; and if they be of the past, still more will the tamest pen be gifted to recall golden days. If thou beest of the Enemy,—of the party unsympathetic with the genius of the place; with the party which I may be allowed, being prejudiced, to describe as *radically* wrong,—pass on at once to 'the next article,'

Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
O'er this unprofitable page!

Oh, the dinner in Hall! and the rows of men rising for the grace; the High table, and the Bachelors' table, and the Commons,—to which the men are very Oliver Cromwells, quickly compelling their disappear-

ance;—the novelty of it all; the fun of it all; so unlike any other condition of things in the wide world. The freedom, the strangeness, the delight! Then to take a glass of wine in some man's rooms for an hour or so of chat; two or three to meet us; not a regular Wine—unlike any ordinary party, surely: men with caps worn, smoking, chaffing,—in this case, innocently merry. *O si*—

But we had wandered back into my brother's rooms. He had drawn for me the heavy easy chair near to the fire; he was busy concocting tea,—had called across the road, spite of my protestations, for some toast from the confectioner's, and had opened one of those long boxes of Huntley and Palmer's *Reading* biscuits, in which the different species are so neatly arranged in their several departments;—but while he thus busied himself, on hospitable thoughts intent, I had a yearning for another peep at the dear old City, and so strolled out into the air.

It was into a back Quad.—a queer, twisty, out-of-the-way place,—but the porch of my brother's staircase commanded a view of an old gabled part of the College. The moon was up, and nearly full, and threw the peaked shadows towards me.

The cool hallowed grey was darker and deeper than in the daylight: the sky, made pale by the moon, was speechful with glitter of stars clustered in the tranquil blue, and, as ever, harmonized most perfectly with the old dark stone. Here and there, in some kindly room, the bright transparency of a crimson curtain, lit to jewel-glow by fire or lamp within, rich in colour as the heart of a carbuncle, gave a new treat to the eye, that, without it, had rested content with the holy grey, deepening into serene blue, and this flecked with snow-fall of stars.

And I leant against the wall, and mused, and fancied myself in rooms of my own, and what and where they would be, and with what neighbours, strangers to me as yet; and determined that crimson curtains should glow from the window, and add a beauty to Oxford streets

at night. For I hold that all, be it in house-building, tree-planting, doing anything in which the eyes of the public are concerned, lose a privilege and fail in an obligation, if they omit to contribute their mite of beauty—be it even *but* a mite—to the wandering, passing and repassing, unknown world without.

I yet lingered, leaning against the wall, and found myself spinning webs of fancy as to the inmates of the lit rooms. Now and then a clatter of tables beaten, or a confusion of voices, and into the quiet night burst the noise

'Of songs, and clapping hands, and boys,
That crash'd the glass and beat the floor.'

And I wandered away in thought to the far-away homes connected with each room; and the aspirations, and hopes, and tears bound up with these young fellows; and mused as to their probable fulfilment, or disappointment. I seemed at last almost to see the dove-winged prayers that were ever soaring from mother's lips and father's heart, on behalf of the bonny boy that had so long been carefully, if not always wisely, tended and guarded, but that now was launched into a position of self-responsibility,—often the beginning of a made or marred life. And I seemed to gather the burden of these—echoes from an old beseeching of love—'I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil.' And to this prayer, my heart, tender with its train of thought, answered with an earnest 'Amen.'

Well, I was called in to tea, I suppose,—but 'tis 'long time ago,' now. I remember that we strolled out, before 'Tom' went down, to the 'Parks,'—grand name to the uninitiated, but, at that time, only a turnip-field a mile in circuit, about which (like marbles in some child's game) reading men spin for a walk, and boating men for a 'grind.'

A misty rain falling now: but we cared little for this, and were soon engaged in earnest converse, which made our feet fly fast round the space. The stars, watery-eyed, looked out now and then, blurred

soon by the thin cloud-veil, and the dim moon made cold steel-gleams lie on the projections of the towers and spires.

A melody, too soft to be sudden, stole from eight bells out of St. Giles' belfry, across the gardens, and found its way to appreciative hearts. The wind played with it, as a cat with a mouse,—now letting it escape quite across to us, anon, with a pounce, snatching it away,—to escape again, and for so long that you thought it had got clear away, until, lo! the sudden paw was laid upon it once more.

Dear old Oxford! I have not, as I

intended to have done, called up the actors, but have contented myself with standing here and there about the old scenery. Delicious, yet melancholy occupation! Other tenants now occupy the rooms where this and that friend used to welcome me; even my own little snuggerly would repudiate me if I essayed to return to it. And perhaps it is not until one stands in the familiar streets again, after a few years have swept away every vestige of the old dear companions, that one positively realizes how utterly and for ever they are gone,—the glorious old Oxford days.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

FROUDE'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.*

MR. FROUDE has let us off cheap. He has cut it short. He had intended to have brought down his history till the death of Queen Elizabeth, and in that case his dozen volumes would have been a score. But he has thought better of it. Perhaps he is becoming infected with the fast-spreading national vice of laziness. Perhaps he finds that Mr. Motley has taken the cream off his subject. Perhaps, like another celebrated historian, the better he becomes acquainted with his heroes and heroines the less he likes them. Anyhow having begun in the middle of one reign he leaves off in the middle of another, and his work is only a tremendous fragment of a colossal description. A writer of a leader in the 'Daily Telegraph' said, the other day, that Mr. Froude had written the history of Henry VIII. at the rate of two volumes a piece to each of the wives. The poor man had evidently never read a line of the author to whom he made his learned allusion; but then a leader-writer must give himself the airs of omniscience, even although the bray

of the ass is detected beneath the skin of the lion. As for Mr. Froude's earlier volumes relating to Henry VIII., we have 'looked into them,' to use the phrase denoting desultory reading, pretty often; but never with very much patience, as we own ourselves disgusted with the pervading theory of the volumes. Henry was a mild and merciful prince, with a special partiality for the wives whose heads he cut off. In this same way, in his last volume, Elizabeth is represented as the constant friend and well-wisher of Mary, Queen of Scots, whilst she, too, had the misfortune of cutting off her dear friend's head. People's heads were cut off with the greatest promptitude and despatch in every direction in those fine historic days. But we have given a rather careful study to the last eight volumes; and now that Mr. Froude definitely states that there are to be no more of them, it may be worth while to state our idea of the work taken as a whole.

We certainly write history in this age with a thoroughness and care of which our forefathers had very little conception. The modern critical faculty and historic faculty were in those days only in their

* The History of England, from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada. By James Anthony Froude, M.A. Vols. XI. XII. Longmans. 1870.

infancy, and showed no indications of ever being combined. For the two thousand years which passed since Thucydides wrote, no historian has ever surpassed him in accuracy of description, incisiveness of language, vigour and depth of thought. But while Thucydides wished to pack within as close limits as possible, the printing press has permitted our historians an infinite expansion. Hume talked a deal of twaddle about what he called the Saxon times. In the last century Robertson wrote a history of Charles V., and received thousands for it too, who was King of Spain and Emperor of Germany, and yet did not understand a word of Spanish or German. You have a quantity of learned authorities in the foot-notes, but I am afraid that they are used at second hand; and then Robertson chiefly followed that rascally Italian writer Gregorio Leti. In some measure we are now getting back to the antique love of truth: the great characteristic of the history-writers of the present day is that they most diligently unearth all possible sources of information. Now that old worlds of heat and storm have cooled down, the different States of Europe allow us to know the truth so far as State-documents will reveal it. Every one is allowed to take observations, to break up the soil, to get what he can of the historic material brought to the daylight. All our own archives, are thrown freely open and to a considerable extent made popularly available under the auspices of the Master of the Rolls. The Spanish government, that was the most jealous and exclusive in Europe, has very freely permitted the archives of Simancas to be explored by students. The highest value is now attached to all family documents, and to those collections of papers which the later representatives of historic families till recently did not like to destroy but hardly knew to what use they should put them. One result of this is that with the present generation history has been written with a fulness of detail, with an accurate transcription of bygone national life, of which the elder historians hardly had

an idea. Another very startling result is that we really know more about the sixteenth century than many of the best-informed people who lived in that age. This is on the same principle that soldiers often know very little about the battles in which they have fought until they read all the particulars in the newspapers. We now sweep the whole field of vision—we hear the various sides of a story—we collate and compare conflicting evidences. The dead handwriting of past years starts into sudden life; things which were whispered in the closet are proclaimed upon the housetops, and witnesses unknown, unsuspected, arise to confront the great criminals of history. These great gains to our knowledge of facts are not without significant alloy. While we are making these immense gains to our knowledge of the facts, we are not without drawbacks which go far to balance them. While governments are willing that all the secrets of their national diplomacy should be dragged into light, their errors and guilt be exposed, in calm indifference to modern opinion on those past days, the mole-eyed historians of the nineteenth century burrow and ponder over the records of the sixteenth until they are agitated with all the passions and animosities of the buried past. There is also a grasping for originality; any violence to fact or sense is permissible that will give a new reading to old narratives; and in this way Bluff Hal is a mild king and a kind, just husband, and humpbacked Richard, in his beneficent treatment of his nephews, becomes a pattern of duty in the avuncular relationship.

Mr. Froude has worked the Simancas mine thoroughly and well. His familiarity with Spain has enabled him to give us an exquisite delineation of the scene in the bay of Ferrol when the Spanish Armada sailed forth for England. We have heard of his residing in Ireland on account of his history, and we feel sure that there has been no available source of information which he would not thoroughly investigate. He has also a winning power of statement, a lucid style, writes

capital English; and on the whole there are few writers who can compare with him in the eloquence, pathos, and picturesqueness of many of his pages. There is also a sturdy patriotic tone about him, which pleases us well. Add to this, he has that dash of sentiment, that dash of philosophizing which suits the taste of the day. But also he has a catalogue of errors which might almost rival the catalogue of ships. We shall leave to the sleuth-hounds of the 'Saturday Review' to follow his track and show up his demonstrable errors. We shall take a broader issue; and indeed there is too much of anise and cummin in mere criticism of detail, unless for showing that while Mr. Froude possesses marvellous knowledge of his own 'period,' he does not know much of English history outside his own period, nor yet of continental history either. Mr. Froude began his work in the desire to 'rehabilitate' Henry VIII., and he allowed himself to be imposed upon by the language of the parliamentary preambles. He was evidently a man only teaching history from point to point as he was able to learn it. He then got pretty comfortably through the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, vindicating the memory of Cranmer against Macaulay, and in other respects highly gratifying the Protestantism of the age. In the age of Elizabeth he began, however, more freely to exhibit a rabid hatred of the Church of England and to run amuck against all 'theology.' He flings to the winds all the moderation and impartiality of the historian; he is a mere partisan, a special pleader, and not, like Hallam or Guizot, a chief justice of history. He lets his 'angry passions rise' when he is not pleased, and under such circumstances he expresses himself like a barbarian.

In the present volumes he makes it his business to write down both Elizabeth of England and Mary of Scotland. *Arcades ambo* is virtually his opinion. He has devoted himself with great energy to the subject of Elizabeth's flirtations, and he certainly enables us to see how very badly she behaved to that poor Duc

d'Alençon. There is at times something very comic in his history of that absurd love affair; and Mr. Froude knows that as a matter of literary art a slightly comic element greatly helps a serious composition. 'Alençon came. He was a small brown creature, deeply pock-marked, with a large head, a knobbed nose, and a hoarse croaking voice; but whether in contradiction, or from whatever cause, she professed to be enchanted with him. Alençon became her 'grenouille,' her frog, a frog prince, beneath whose hideousness lay enchanted, visible only to a lover's eye, a form of preternatural beauty.' Elizabeth jilted him. She had told him awful lies, and Mr. Froude makes no allowance for lovers' perjuries. Let him tell the story of the ultimate rejection.

'Burghley could prevail nothing. The Queen took him in hand herself. She said she would not marry a Catholic. He swore he loved her so that he would turn Protestant for her sake. She told him that she could not conquer her disinclination; she was sorry, but such was the fact. Might she not be a friend and sister to him? In a tumult of agitation he declared that he had suffered anguish from his passion for her. He had dared the ill opinion of all the Catholics in Europe. He had run a thousand risks for her, and sooner than leave England without her, he would rather they both perished.

'The Queen agitated, or professing to be agitated in turn, exclaimed, "that he must not threaten a poor old woman in her own kingdom; passion, not reason spoke in him," she said, "or she would think him mad. She begged him not to use such dreadful words."

"No, no, madame," croaked the poor Prince, "you mistake; I meant no hurt to your blessed person. I meant only that I would sooner be cut in pieces than not marry you, and so be laughed at by the world."

'With these words he burst into tears. The Queen gave him her handkerchief to wipe his eyes with, and in this charming situation the curtain drops over the scene.'

This is the kind of writing in which Mr. Froude excels; but when

we come to compare the text with the authority for the text, we see, to put it mildly, that the version has not lost colour in the transcription. Queen Elizabeth was a great flirt, and her personal vanity, when she was an old woman, has made her the laughing-stock of centuries. We were afraid she was double-dealing and insincere. Mr. Froude calls her mean, lying, avaricious, artful, ungrateful, and so on, with a long string of expressed or implied abusive epithets; in all of which there is no doubt a certain amount of truth, but we allow Mr. Froude a very liberal margin. We see what he is aiming at, and we do not choose to take it in. As he has written up Henry VIII., so he chooses to write down Queen Elizabeth. But we must take leave to inform him that Queen Elizabeth is not so easily written down. She was considered a great queen long before Mr. Froude chose to pronounce her a 'small' one, and she will be considered a great one long after his attempt to malign her is pronounced 'small' indeed. His theory is that she is responsible for all the harm and for none of the good of her reign. She was not only guilty of perfidy to her lovers, but of foul treason towards her allies and of atheism in religion. As a *per contra*, she was brave, she was frugal, and, above all things, he says that she was noted for her uniformly kind and generous treatment of her rival, Mary, Queen of Scots. This is Mr. Froude's view, and we have no hesitation in saying that a more crooked, paradoxical, crotchety way of writing history could not be devised. He has let us into the secrets of Elizabeth's life and reign in greater detail than we had hitherto known, and he has let us see how much her littleness marred her greatness. But for all that, the greatness is indisputably there. Mr. Froude, we suppose by some slip of the pen, calls her 'great' at least once, and it so happily happens, that his own pages furnish the evidence by which he himself is most effectually refuted.

His treatment of Mary, Queen of Scots, is greatly worse. If he has

chastised Elizabeth with whips, he has chaastised Mary with scorpions. She has much to answer for, the poor queen! If Mr. Froude had temperately stated the great accusations of history against her, it would have sufficed. But he is almost beside himself in his rage and indignation against her, as much so as Burleigh and Walsingham, who knew full well that if Mary lived to succeed Elizabeth, their own estates and lives would not be safe. He screams out against her as if under the influence of blinded, passionate terror. Not content in dealing with objective facts, he imputes states of mind to her which she obviously could not have possessed, and ignores the mental state in which she habitually lived. Mary, as queen regnant, detained in England without her consent, heir to the English crown even according to the Protestant view, the *de jure* monarch according to the Roman Catholic view, held herself morally justified in resorting to every means for the restitution of fame, liberty, and rights. Mr. Froude is unable to realize Mary's point of view. And if Mary went beyond any allowable line when she lent herself to Babington's conspiracy, it must be recollected that she was virtually enticed into that conspiracy by Elizabeth's ministers, and that it was the one conspiracy in which Elizabeth ran no real peril. Mr. Froude's account of the Fotheringay execution has called down upon his devoted head an indignant reprobation like that which has alighted through the Byron scandal on Mrs. Beecher Stowe. Even the friendly 'Edinburgh' does not seem to like it, and 'Blackwood,' with the energy of old days, pronounces Mr. Froude a 'ghoul.' He denies that Mary died like a Christian woman, but died an actress and a liar. He talks about her red under-dress, her false hair, the scars on her shoulder, the body stripped after the execution, the face once so fair distorted by death into ugliness. We do not envy Mr. Froude the writing of this description. Here is the grandest tragedy of British history awaiting

his portraiture, and he describes it much as Mr. Calcraft might have done.

After Mary is executed, after Elizabeth, whether truly or untruly—who can certainly say?—has denied her intention that the warrant should be carried out, which she could not deny that she signed, there is little until we come to the Spanish Armada. We thought that Mr. Froude had intended to conclude his entertainment with a blaze of fireworks. But this is hardly the case. As we read his account of the Armada, we recollect that Mr. Motley has done it already, and in some respects has done it better. We see also how at times Mr. Motley and Mr. Froude are at issue; they cannot present the facts in the same way, or draw the same inferences from the admitted facts—which is very instructive; for we see with what suspicions and deductions history must be read, and what an extreme likelihood there is that Mr. Froude has many besides his demonstrable errors. That part of the Armada story, after the action and the storm, the flight past the Orkneys and the west coast of Ireland, is told by Mr. Froude extremely well, and at greater detail than we have elsewhere seen. Mr. Froude has said some ugly things of England's treatment of Ireland, but he says some uglier things of Irishmen's treatment of their allies the Spaniards, and the passages are pretty well cancelled.

It is rather an odd emotion to feel that we have now quite done with Mr. Froude's history. His volumes used to make their appearance with much regularity, and we always looked upon them as a kind of useful *pièce de résistance* in our reading. We liked to read them, but we always read them with a measure of distrust and disapprobation, and those feelings were never stronger than in the case of these concluding volumes. We are sorry on Mr. Froude's own account, because we think he has missed a great opportunity. By an unfortunate flaw in his nature, he has vitiated what really might have been a great work, and instead of

producing in any real sense a history of England, he has virtually done little better than produce *mémoires pour servir à l'histoire*.

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.

'Shall I not take mine ease in my inn?' The answer is, Yes, if you can get it. I delight in the inn, where, the more trouble you give, the more things you call for, the warmer is your welcome. It is often a pleasant thought, in a long day's severe wandering, to let the mental eye dwell well pleased on that sort of picture which Cowper loved so well—shutters closed, curtains drawn, the luxurious couch, the hissing urn, and the contents of the mail bag. All this may be secured at the average well-conducted English inn. Some of the innkeepers I have known have been among the pleasantest, best-hearted, and best-informed of my acquaintance. The agitation is absurd, which, on account of some few sots, always the abhorrence of a good inn, and who would be sots at any place or under any circumstances, would wish travellers to be excluded from the good things which they very sorely want. Still I am going to set forth a legitimate complaint which I have against some of the English hotels.

I got in one night lately into a famous cathedral city, and resorted to an hotel which said all good things in favour of itself in the pages of Bradshaw. They say that self-praise is no recommendation, but this is a mistake, for when you want a recommendation and none is forthcoming, you are ready to adopt a man's estimate of himself. I really thought, however, that my host had underpraised himself, for I was shown into a most luxurious room; a cheerful fire was blazing; the papers were lying about; there was an air of the utmost comfort and domesticity everywhere. The room was pretty full of gentlemen, well-dressed, well-mannered, acute, cheerful, and intelligent. There was not a touch of superciliousness about the waiters, who were evidently anxious to make all their guests comfortable and perfectly

at home. I felt pleasantly thawed by the quiet influences around me, took sherry and soda, reposed on an easy couch, ordered a light supper, and caught up fragments of fresh, hearty, and original talk, which pleased me greatly.

I noticed a number of packages lying about this large, handsome room. The men, with all their pleasant, unaffected ways, had a little too much keenness about them—an unrest evidenced also by a number of Bradshaws lying about. I soon found out that they were commercial travellers, and I only trust they had as good opinion of me as I bore away of them. They gave me a great deal of interesting information about themselves and on various subjects. I rarely have spent a more pleasant evening. But, alas! I was not allowed to conclude it in peace. A waiter entered, transfixed me with a severe glance, and said: 'A mistake, I believe, sir. This is the way to the coffee-room.' I resigned myself to my fate. The waiter effected a capture, took me off to the coffee-room—chilly, small, with horse-hair sofa and chairs, with a draught, with a smoky chimney, with coloured prints of horses and a county directory, with my own very bad company. I missed the modern knights of the road sorely, groaned deeply, and went to bed vindictively.

They were, indeed, gentlemanly and intelligent men, not knowing much, perhaps, of the world of books, but with a thorough knowledge of our own country, and with quite a gift of the faculty of observation, sharpened and improved by constant cultivation. Mr. Zinke says, in his recent volume of American travels, that in his voyage to New York, 'the best-mannered people were the Yankee and New York traders; some of these were buyers for large wholesale and retail houses, others on their own account. There were about a dozen of them on board. They were very careful about their dress, and their conversation was pleasing and intelligent. The majority of them were entirely free from the Yankee tone of voice. They were the very reverse of pushing, and they never guessed.'

Similar commendation is justly due to our English commercial travellers. Some of them are men of great experience and knowledge of the world, and receive their clear thousand a-year besides their expenses, for services which are perhaps not too highly remunerated even at this rate. Publicity is everything to people in business, and there are just two ways of publicity being insured, on the rival merits of which I do not profess to form an opinion—either by advertising or by the system of employing travellers. Some businesses hold most firmly by advertising. Commercial travellers hold most firmly by themselves. They have a peculiar plan for them in the hotel system. Every hotel has its commercial room and its commercial tariff. They pay about a third or a quarter less than the coffee-room travellers, and sometimes, as in the case I have just given, they get three or four times the comfort of the coffee-room. In country districts they have various immunities. When a man drives a gig they often would not charge him for his bed. If he brought his wife with him it was a point of good manners not to charge for the wife. The allowance for expenses was liberal, and, though some saved, others made a point of spending at least all they got this way. They are the most wary and scientific of travellers. I have heard the remark made that they monopolise a little too much of the attendance and of good fares, to the injury of the coffee-room and the ultimate loss of the landlord.

It used to be objected against commercial travellers, as a class, that they were rather given to hard drinking. There might have been some truth in this. When the landlord was generous in his charges, the travellers would be generous in their consumption of port and sherry. Things are now arranged upon a proper business basis. Still they do a great deal of business with their clients over a friendly glass of wine. The shopkeeper often expects that, as a matter of course, the bagman should ask him to crack a bottle of wine with him

at his inn. The commercial traveller perhaps considers this a burden and a nuisance; but still it is an essentially British mode of transacting business. The commercial traveller, who comes to-day and goes to-morrow, giving fortune no hostages, and, owing to local society no claims, often has the credit of being rather an irregular member of the body politic. But I am not going to believe anything to the discredit of the commercial rooms. It must not be supposed that in these railway days the travelling bagman with his gig is altogether superseded. And I could almost wish myself that travelling bagman, at least in the more favourable aspect of business—for the business, as one of them feelingly expressed it, is not 'all beer and skittles.' But as the commercial traveller in pleasant weather gets into his neat gig, and jogs along through pleasant country lanes remote from railways; and extracts a long summer tour from his very work, with just enough to occupy and not enough to burden his mind, and sees all the ins and outs, the byways and corners of English provincial life, and is the honoured and favourite guest of each hostel to which he comes, who, I ask, is so fortunate as the Commercial Traveller?

FARADAY AND BREWSTER.*

Two scientific biographies, of a very interesting and instructive character, have lately appeared. Faraday and Brewster were both of them men of whom the world would willingly hear much concerning their inner life. We regret that neither of these biographies is perfectly adequate and satisfactory. The two volumes on Faraday are too big and too meagre, containing many letters and travelling sketches which judicious editorial care would

have omitted, and giving us comparatively little of Faraday's home life and inner disposition. On the whole they contrast unfavourably with Professor Tyndall's brilliant little volume on Faraday as a discoverer. The book about Sir David Brewster gives that sort of information which we should so greatly desire to possess in regard to Faraday. It gives the 'Home Life,' but then it gives little more; and a discriminating view of Sir David Brewster, as a man of science and letters, yet remains to be written by another kind of biographer than his good daughter.

We must, then, frankly own that we are disappointed with the present life of Faraday. When a gentleman of Dr. Bence Jones's scientific eminence undertook such a glorious subject, we naturally formed the highest expectations, which have been greatly disappointed. As a rule it may be broadly said that all biographies are too long, and this is certainly the case upon the present occasion. The striking lesson for most of us is the example of self-reliance, character, and energy which did so much for the poor bookseller's boy. The happiest bit of his life was the fact of his introduction to Sir Humphry Davy, although the littleness of human greatness is shown in the humiliating fact that Davy afterwards showed a decided grudge towards Faraday. The gleam of poetry, apart from that poetic glow of imagination which permeated Faraday's scientific character as a discoverer, was the story, which is here rather prettily told, of the philosopher's courtship and marriage. Apart from this, his letters are often uninteresting and often wordy. His foreign journals, beyond the mere fact of the authorship, appear to us to be absolutely devoid of interest. The scientific matter of the work, in which Dr. Tyndall's work is almost bodily incorporated, is rather ahead of that individual of whom we have not in general too high an opinion—the general reader.

Yet there are points which might be dwelt on with some emphasis—the independence with which he re-

* 'The Life and Letters of Faraday.' By Dr. Bence Jones, Secretary to the Royal Institution. In two vols. London: Longmans.

'The Home Life of Sir David Brewster.' By his Daughter, Mrs. Gordon. Edinburgh: Edmonstone and Douglas.

fused his pension when Lord Melbourne said a pension was a humbug—his love for his mother, who was almost, of course, unable to understand the nature of his work—the minuteness and accuracy of his observations—the thoroughness, genuineness, and humility of the man. In his account of a walking tour in Wales he gives a life-like account of a country doctor's assistant who did not know the difference between nitric and muriatic acid. At the same time the doctor was haughty and dictatorial to a poor woman who came in with a bottle and a prescription. We sympathise with Faraday, who is severe on one 'who without a knowledge even of the first requisites of an honourable but dangerous profession, assumed to himself its credit and its power, and dashed at once upon human life with all the means of destruction about him and the most perfect ignorance of their force.' While he is in love, Faraday's Journal almost flows over with sentiment and poetry; and we do not wonder that in later years he adds the word *hum*! to one of his glowing paragraphs. The young lady's father declared that 'love made philosophers into fools,' while the philosopher himself writes, 'Chlorides, trials, Davy, steel, miscellanea, mercury, and fifty other professional fancies swim before me, and drive me further and further into the quandary of stupidity.' Thackeray's letters to his wife are love-letters to the end of the chapter. He made Turner's acquaintance, and the painter used to write to him about his pigments. Turner's pigments must, however, have been bad, as his pictures are sadly falling off in colour. When Brewster was tired with his science he used to turn to a novel 'that had a thread to it,' which he found a great rest. He found his greatest rest in going half-price to the pit of a theatre. He liked to read aloud. The Scriptures were studied constantly. He always had some original investigation on hand, and always knocked off work at eleven. Yet, with all his wise method and his thoughtful relaxation, the mental strain was too great for his health. While he

was lecturing in a way in which no man in England could lecture, he also preached alternate weeks in a little Sandemanian chapel, quietly and devoutly seeking truth, we expect, in a slightly sectarian sort of way. The manner in which Faraday was able to keep science and religion altogether distinct is very remarkable. Some of the letters are very interesting. We find a gifted woman of rank wanting to devote herself to science and to study under him. The present Emperor of the French writes to him more than once on the subject of scientific experiments. The Prince of Wales sends him a graceful note, thanking him for his lectures. When the Queen gave him the use of the house on the green of Hampton Court, her Majesty caused it to be put in thorough repair for him.

More limited and more readable is the book about Brewster. Sir David, we are rather surprised to find, had been a preacher in early life, but for all that he seems to have gone to rather queer places and to have held rather queer opinions. He too, like Faraday, fought the battle of life bravely, to extreme old age, and attained to the highest honours. We must cull a few rather good stories from the narrative.

A dinner with Cavendish, the philosopher.—'Cavendish invariably had a leg of mutton for his solitary dinner. On one occasion he announced to his servant that six gentlemen were to dine with him on that day. "What am I to give them for dinner?" ejaculated the factotum, in dismay; "one leg of mutton won't do for six gentlemen." "Then give them six legs of mutton!" was the philosophical reply.'

Lord Brougham in the country.—'Lord Brougham, being indisposed, retired early to rest one evening. An hour or two afterwards the question was raised whether Lord Chancellors carried the Great Seal with them in social visitings. The Duchess declared her intention of ascertaining the fact, and ordered a cake of soft dough to be made. A procession of lords, ladies, and gentlemen was then formed, Sir David carrying a pair of silver candle-

sticks, and the Duchess bearing a silver salver, on which was placed the dough. The invalid lord was aroused from his first sleep by this strange procession, and a peremptory demand that he should get up and exhibit the Great Seal. He whispered ruefully to Sir David that the first half of this request he could not possibly comply with, but asked him to bring a certain strange-looking box. When this was done he gravely sat up, impressed the seal upon the cake of dough, the procession retired in order, and the Lord Chancellor returned to his pillow.

The Kohinoor.—‘When, at his suggestion, fifteen or sixteen gas-lights were placed behind, it threw out a radiance of coloured light which delighted all who saw it. In 1852, having been consulted, along with others, by Prince Albert, as to the best manner of having it recut, he was kindly given every facility of examining it at Buckingham Palace, which he did with the microscope and by the aid of polarized light. This further minute investigation only confirmed the conclusion he had previously arrived at—that this diamond, large and beautiful as it was, was not the Mountain of Light, nor any portion cut from the original body.’

Ball at Buckingham Palace.—‘It was a splendid sight, and I met there with crowds of friends. The Queen danced a great deal, and there was something in her whole manner—so happy and cheerful and frank—and in that of the Prince, which made the most favourable impression on everybody. The apartments in the palace were all thrown open, and the party was very numerous. There were refreshments—tea, coffee, ices, &c.—in one room, and a standing supper in the dining-room. We got home about three o’clock in the morning, after waiting about an hour and a half in the lobby, where some ladies were sleeping on their seats, and others stretched on the stone steps waiting for their carriages. The whole display surpassed in beauty and in grandeur anything I had seen.’

Prince Albert.—‘I have just returned from an hour and a half’s interview with the Prince, who unfolded to me his plan of a great central industrial institution, to which the 500,000*l.* obtained from the Exhibition is to be devoted. I have been much impressed with his sagacity and knowledge and great frankness. He told me of a letter which the Queen received from some Indian grandee, addressed to The Right Hon. Sir George Victoria, Queen of the East India Company.’

Mr. Home and Spirit-Rapping.—‘Last of all, I went with Lord Brougham to a séance of the new spirit-rapper, Mr. Home, a lad of twenty, the son of a brother of the late Earl of Home. . . . Hands are sometimes seen and felt; the hand often grasps another, and melts away, as it were, under the grasp. The object of asking Lord Brougham and me seems to have been to get our favourable opinion of the exhibition; but though neither of us can explain what we saw, we do not believe that it was the work of idle spirits.’

Napoleon III.—‘The Prince, to whom I was introduced, presided, and spoke beautifully. He is the very image of his uncle Napoleon, and corpulent, but a noble-looking person.’

Cardinal Antonelli.—‘I was much struck with Cardinal Antonelli, and a more interesting person I never met with. His looks, his manner and his intelligence, were all of a high order. He was tall, thin, and sallow, dressed in a singular blue cloth dress like a dressing-gown, with red buttons.’

Mr. Disraeli.—‘At an interview with Mr. Disraeli yesterday I was the last of about twenty that came into the room; and having been announced by name, Disraeli walked half-way up his long drawing-room, and said that it was a long time since he had the pleasure of meeting with me. I had utterly forgotten having ever met him, but I began to remember that Mr. Lockhart brought him one day to Allerby when he was a very young man.’

Mr. Gladstone — The Princess of Wales.—‘Dr. Lyon Playfair and I

waited in the receiving-room [of the Athenæum] till Mr. Gladstone came to take us to the levée in his carriage. There are to be no fewer than one hundred and eighty-three presentations to-day; and as Mr. Gladstone had to attend a meeting of the Cabinet he wrote to General Knollys to ask him to make our reception early. He made it the first. Mr. Gladstone having told the police that we were to be admitted early at a private door, they succeeded with much difficulty in forcing us past the innumerable obstacles by which the street was blocked up. Mr. Gladstone was called in alone—I presume from the awkwardness of keeping a Cabinet Minister waiting. Some time elapsed before we were admitted. The attendants of the Prince and Princess were not numerous. The Princess is truly beautiful and most intellectual-looking; but I was told she varied very considerably, and this accounts for the different characters of her photographs.'

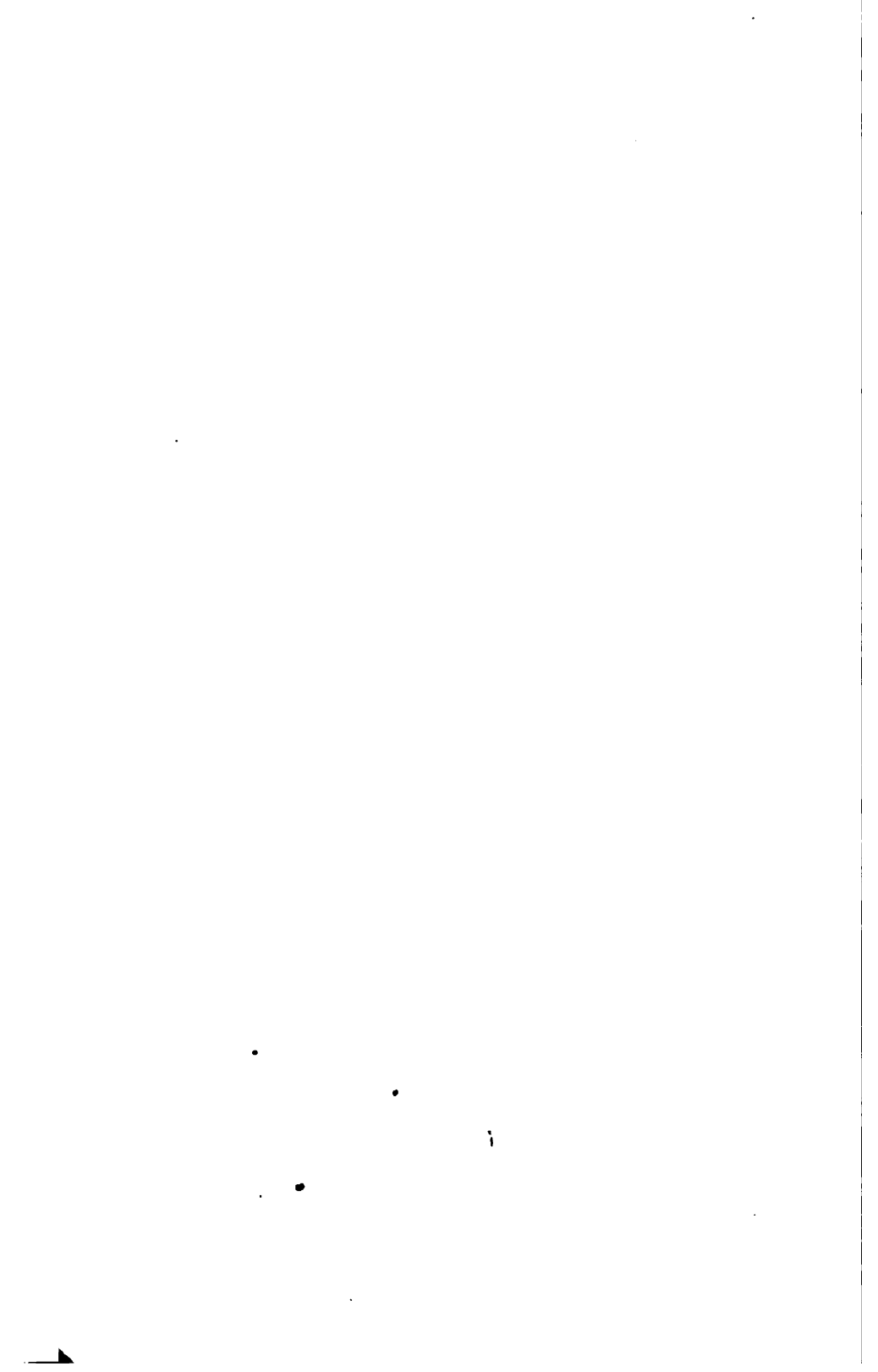
In his old age Sir David was married, and a little girl was born to him. He must have been nearly eighty when he caught the whooping-cough. He was an astonishing man. The mere catalogue of his productions occupies twenty-four pages. A great deal of his biography, and an interesting section of Faraday's, are occupied with religious matters, into which it is not our province to enter. It would be a good thing if Faraday's wise reticence in these matters were more generally observed by scientific men. When we read the writings of Professor Huxley and Dr. Tyndall, and see their undisguised irreligious drift, we may fall back on

the still greater names of Faraday and Brewster, who held so truly to Bacon's wise axiom, that there should 'be given unto faith the things that are faith's.'

A very interesting and able little work, published lately by one of our most distinguished naturalists, Mr. Morris, on the 'Difficulties of Darwinism,'* contains a correspondence with Professor Huxley, which is certainly not the best omen for the peace and prosperity of the next meeting of the British Association. Into the scientific merits of this remarkable publication we cannot here enter. We are not quite sure that Mr. Morris fully recognizes that after all Dr. Darwin, whatever his own conviction may be, gives his theory as an hypothesis. Often as the monstrous character of this theory has been commented on, we have never seen it dealt with so curtly and convincingly before, as by Mr. Morris. Professor Huxley, in a letter which we shall forbear to quote, gets into an unphilosophic tone of mind. It is a great merit of such biographies as those of Faraday and Brewster, that they show that science need not be brought into conflict with religion, and that if this happens it is not altogether so impossible that religion should have the best of it, and that men of the highest intellect may be both Christians and philosophers, bringing the spirit of religion into the pursuit of science, and the methods and spirit of science into the investigation and practice of religious truth.

* 'Difficulties of Darwinism, with a Preface and a Correspondence with Professor Huxley.' By the Rev. F. O. Morris, Rector of Nunburnholme. Longmans.







STUDIES FROM LIFE AT THE COURT OF ST. JAMES'S.
THE QUEEN OF THE BELGIANS.

Drawn by the late George H. Thomas. Engraved by William L. Thomas.



LONDON SOCIETY.

APRIL, 1870.



THE LAST LOOK AT THE GLASS BEFORE STARTING.

SCENE.—*The Country.* TIME.—*To be off. Ten miles to drive.*

The Father of his Daughter. 'H'm, Change!'

The Daughter of her Father. 'Ha, Fair!'

ON THE FRENCH STAGE.

'MODERN Life at the Theatre' is the title given by an able writer, M. Jules Claretie, to a reprint of his criticisms on dramatic art published in the 'Opinion Nationale' newspaper.* They make

* 'La Vie Moderne au Théâtre, Causes sur l'Art Dramatique.' Par Jules Claretie. Paris, Georges Barba.

VOL. XVII.—NO. C.

both an instructive and an amusing volume, from his intimate knowledge of the subject and his fair appreciation of different actors' merits. They also record, apropos to the above, many curious features of Parisian society, literature, and life; and, as they are not likely to appear entire in English, an antho-

logy culled from them may be welcome.

In a recent paper on a grave and important subject, namely, 'The White Cat,' we mentioned the *Athénée* as the fourth lyrical theatre of Paris, and we advise lovers of light and pretty music to make acquaintance with it when next they visit the French capital, the more so as it does not lie out of the way, being a few steps behind the New Grand Opera. Moreover, it has the merit of beginning late, allowing them time to dine at leisure. M. Claretie acquaints us with the circumstances to which we owe this new place of musical entertainment.

The *Athénée* is a lecture-room transformed into a small but com-medi-ous theatre. The truth is—and the severe remark is not ours, but our author's—that there does not exist in France (which is a pity) a public to fill a lecture-room. Without any great power of divination he foresaw the platform from which Messieurs Yung and Legouvé once spoke converted into the boards of a playhouse. Whilst in England people throng, day after day and night after night, to learn chemistry and natural philosophy from a Faraday relating the history of a candle, to listen to a Tyndall explaining the connection of heat with motion, or to hear a Dickens read, as few men can, passages from his own romances, in France a holy horror is felt for whatever can increase the spread of human knowledge. When people go to hear a speaker, it is more with the hope of being amused than with any desire of gaining information. At the *Athénée* the great majority only went there because the seats cost less than at other places of entertainment, or because at the box-offices no more places were to be had for the 'Grand Duchesse de Gérolstein.' In their eyes, the *Athénée* had no business to be a branch of the *Collège de France*; they preferred its conversion into a supplement to the *Palais Royal Theatre* or the *Variétés*.

But human beings are more interesting than the buildings that harbour them. Let us take the actor Bouffé, who, according to M. Cla-

retie, is perfection itself. With what skill he makes himself up, transforming himself into the personage represented! After playing, in 'Père Turlututu,' a shaky, snuffing, meddling old busybody, he appears in 'Les Vieux Péchés' as a retired dancer, who has become mayor of his commune and churchwarden of his parish. His costume is a composition. Brass-buttoned coat, bright-brown waistcoat, frilled shirt, lace ruffles, rings and chains—all the paraphernalia of an elderly buck still vain of his person, with a light flaxen wig in beautiful curl, and the gait of a *premier saut* of the ballet, which there is no mistaking. Even when the dancer walks you perceive that he has been used to flourish his legs. Bouffé, as Gambetti, the once first-rate dancer, is not the actor to forget that peculiarity. His skipping step is a marvel of observation.

Bouffé, in his numerous creations, has gone as far as art can go without the grand inspiration which transports you at once to another world. His only genius is persevering study; but he has taken such pains, he has paid such ceaseless attention to details, to the correctness of his gestures and the inflections of his voice, as to become not certainly the greatest artist but the first comedian of his day. But he has no personal advantages, like most other actors. He is small and slight, but he has completely triumphed over those drawbacks. By continued efforts he has moulded his nervous temperament to all sorts of incarnations. Good-natured and simple, confident even to blindness in Michael Perrin, he is terrible with his sordid avarice and egotism as Père Grandet. In the same evening he will play you, with equal truthfulness, the Gamin de Paris, a boy, and Pauvre Jacques, an old man.

In the 'Vieux Péchés' there is a scene which he hits off admirably—the dancing lesson. His goddaughter, a young lady belonging to the corps de ballet of the Opera, comes to ask the retired dancer to appear, for one night only, for somebody's benefit. Monsieur le Maire draws

back quite shocked. What an idea! He show himself upon the stage! A public functionary to paint his face and put on skin-tights! *Avant, Satan, and tempt me not!*

'But in any case, godpapa, you will not refuse me your advice?' And she begins to dance, raises her arms, attitudinises, outs capers. He looks at her, occasionally expressing his approbation. 'Yes; that's it. But there's a movement which savours of the new school of dancing. That's what ballet-masters teach now o' days! How ridiculous! And they call that dancing! Ah! what would Vestris say? Here; look at me; this is the classical style of doing it.' And off he starts, leaping, executing steps, showing positions. He adds the word to the action, he explains his pantomime, he underlines his gestures by reasons for them, he gives a lecture on the artistic expression of emotion. It is clear that, in spite of his official dignity, he cannot resist the opportunity of advocating his own choreographic method and principles.

Bouffé does all this in the most delightful style. It is hard to believe that this man, so sure of himself, of every movement and exclamation, whose play is so studied, leaving nothing to the inspiration of the moment, should be the most timid of actors—timid as a *débutant* before he comes on the stage. Every time he had to create a new part, even at the height of his success, the poor man was ill, really ill. Bouffé, always weak, has been sustained by his nervous force. With a less stubborn will he would certainly have broken down. Whenever a new piece was performed for the first time, his emotion was so great that he was obliged to change his shirt at the end of each act. On such occasions he was afraid, and has probably still not mastered his fears. And yet the crowd which scares him, and the boards which seem to burn his feet, communicate such energy that, though ailing and weary, he has always found, before the public, a magnetic power which makes him robust on the stage. No one, even now, would take him for an old man; he has lost nothing

of his voice, his spirit, his emphatic gestures; but he only possesses them while acting. In private life he does not conceal his infirmities, but reserves all his strength for his darling public.

Got, of the *Théâtre Français*, is another admirable actor. His *Duc Job*, for instance, is a personage perfectly got up from top to toe. The gestures, tone of voice, to the very accent and *tic* of the barracks—everything is noted and rendered without affectation. He has the simple gaiety of a child, and the depressed, despairing moments of a grown man. When he sobs upon the sofa, at his broken love and the memory of his departed friend, he attains the most touching actuality. Got found his real place when he set himself to render in this way the sorrows of modern life, the emotions arising out of cotemporary circumstances. He belongs to us and to our days, in all his ways of thinking and acting, and the spectator is immediately conscious of it. Others invent, he studies; others imagine, he observes; others have elegance, he has energy; others hold to tradition, he grasps the truth. In short, Got is a real and thoroughly conscientious artist.

Perhaps the most admired and idolised of all French living actors and actresses—I do not here include amongst them the Schneiders and others, who raise a laugh and make you stare at their fearlessness—is *Frédéric Lemaître*, often spoken of affectionately as plain *Frédéric*. He touches nothing that he does not adorn, even the strangest absurdities and incongruities; witness his performance of *Père Gachette* at the *Folies-Dramatiques*, in 1867. Such a drama would never enter your head—such a promising glut of crimes and corpses. It was a posthumous piece which would never have been played had its author, *Paulin Deslandes*, still survived; but there was his family to be assisted, and certainly it would have been a pity to lose one of *Frédéric's* most striking creations.

Paulin Deslandes was a man of talent who, in the popular drama, more than once touched the right

note. This 'Père Gachette' was found in his drawer, and they determined to act it. They polished it up, remodelled the framework, and, in short, tried to render it passable, presentable—no easy task. Luckily, a great actor was at their disposal, Frédéric Lemaître, who weathered the storm. A man of genius, like him, fixes all our attention upon himself and causes his surroundings to be forgotten. Frédéric is the soul of this crazy drama. In his hands, impossibilities become probable, absurdities superb, and the ridiculous story haunts and worries you like an actual occurrence.

Frédéric's old age resembles a summer's evening, in which, after a tempest, under a cooler sky, you give their full course to thoughts of the past. Those who knew him in his fever fits, in the hot battles of other days, in the 'Thirty Years of a Gambler's Life' and 'Ruy-Blas,' behold him now with renewed admiration, calmed down, softened, majestic with his white hair, which he keeps completely at his command, which he makes stand on end, flattens, or puts in disorder, almost gifting it with speech, reminding you of Michael Angelo's prophets in the Sistine Chapel, with their hoary locks streaming in the wind. The voice is sometimes in default, but the intonation is so correct, the countenance so eloquent, that everybody comprehends or divines what he says. And then the gestures are always magnificent, surprising in their truthfulness. In Père Gachette, we have none of the grand impetuous movements of Don César, nor, as in the Thirty Years, the haughty pantomime of an Ajax who would brave the lightning. More subdued, but equally powerful and singularly accurate, at once homely and superb, Frédéric's play is a succession of minute but marvellous details which melt into one harmonious composition.

Père Gachette—not to analyse the piece, but to give you an idea of Frédéric's part—is a locksmith, a pupil of Gamain, the man of the iron closet. He had worked, in his time, with Louis XVI. at the Tuileries. He is an honest artisan,

who, without depriving himself of needful comforts, adopts tall orphan lads and little girls abandoned by their parents. The result of which—through combinations of accidents not related or explained—is that his adopted son, Saverne, happens to be the father of the little girl Etoile, whom Gachette has also taken under his wing. Perhaps it might have happened in this wife. The young man once loved, and was loved by, a young woman who is now the Duchesse d'Aubigny. Say she had a misfortune before her marriage, and that this misfortune, which she was glad to get rid of, is little Etoile. Say that she renews her acquaintance with the abandoned child and the once-beloved father, and you have a delicate situation ready to explode at any time.

Though ladies may think it fine to become a duchesse, they cannot do so without a duke. This one is a very demon of jealousy. He scents that there is something in the wind, and suspects improprieties which may not exist. So he decoys Saverne to his hotel in the Rue de Grenelle, where he has a cast-iron cage or chamber, in which he locks up the duchesse, Saverne, and their little daughter into the bargain. Once there, deprived of food and air, wife, lover, and child must perish, and Blue Beard will wash his hands of the business. Have you ever read Edgar Poe's story of the dying man imprisoned in the chamber whose walls gradually closed in, in all directions, till they crushed the victim? The scene at the Folies-Dramatiques promised a repetition of that pleasant spectacle; but the curtain fell before the personages were completely suffocated.

Their vital spark, however, is not quite extinguished; and Père Gachette, as you may imagine, possesses the secret of opening the cage. Unfortunately, the good man talks of the affair, and persists in maintaining that, in the Hôtel d'Aubigny, there are iron cages like those once existing at Plessis-les-Tours; so a medical practitioner pronounces him insane, has him confined in a cell, and recommends him to yield to the cooling influence of bars, bolts, and

shower-baths. Gachette shouts and entreats in vain; nobody vouchsafes to listen to him. Losing patience, he adopts a desperate measure, sets fire to the house, contrives to escape in the confusion, and quietly proceeds to deliver the captives, whom he finds fatigued, prostrated, suffocated, starved. They will get off with the fright, under skilful treatment. But these sort of stories are not meant to be told; they must be seen in action to be appreciated.

In the part of Gachette, Frédéric forgets nothing, neither the emotion caused by grief, nor the peculiarities derived from his trade. Out of a personage of no decided character, a worn-out coin that has passed through every melodrama, he creates—and the word is appropriate—a living being, full of contrasts—one of those old Parisian artisans whom you have met, elbowed, and chatted with about their profession of faith and their previous history. Frédéric is here a real locksmith, an honest workman who does not look beyond his duty and his tools. He has the energy of the working man, with his healthy cheerfulness and his hearty laugh. You should see him at one of his comrades' wedding, gallantly offering his hand to the bride, trying a step, attempting a figure, and when the fumes of the wine mount to his head, elated, unsteady on his legs, humming tunes, and laughing at nothing. This tipsiness is completely different from the intoxication of Don César de Bazan or the insatiable drunkenness of the Chiffonier de Paris. Frédéric is master of all these shades of inebriation.

We have mentioned the details he brings to the composition of his parts. For instance, when he writes a letter, he does not do it off-hand, passing the pen over the paper without making a stroke, as other actors do. On the contrary, he wipes his pen, dips it in the ink from time to time, and turns the leaf over. In 'André Gerard,' he acted one of the most pathetic scenes—and its effect was thereby doubled—mechanically holding his cravat in his hand. In the last act of 'Thirty

Years of a Gambler's Life,' poverty-struck, in rags, when he sits down to table, he has a way of unfolding his handkerchief to serve as napkin, a remnant of the habits of his better days, which is a masterstroke of observation. In 'Père Gachette,' when he offers his hand to the bride to conduct her to the dance, he holds his silk gloves between his fingers; he does not put them on. And while conversing and arguing with the doctor, he instinctively helps himself to a pinch from his snuff-box. It is these innumerable nothings which constitute the really superior actor and give the part the intensity of life. And all these details, apparently insignificant, make up together an admirably consistent whole.

But Frédéric has no rival in the act in which Gachette, confined in the madhouse, beset in his cell by the fixed idea of quitting it in order to deliver Saverny, interrogates and feels at himself, doubting his own sanity, and gradually rising into fury. This scene, too lightly treated by the author, is rendered singularly striking by the actor. It might easily have been terrible. In fact, what situation can be more dramatic than this? A man, in full possession of his mental faculties, shut up in a lunatic asylum, and there conducting himself like a maniac, to convince other people that he is in his senses! The stronger his protests that he is not mad, the more he proves his madness in the doctor's eyes. His anger soon is changed to fever; his blood boils; and after arguments, explanations, and entreaties, the poor wretch will certainly come to threats and howlings. Only a short time previously, the same fact had actually occurred in Paris. An unfortunate passenger, on getting out of a railway carriage, was taken, by mistake, and carried off from the station to the cell of a madhouse. We cannot conceive any possible situation—and it is said such 'mistakes' are not very rare—more dreadful or atrocious than this.

Frédéric paints this horrible position to the life. He has moments of terror which make you

turn cold; something like the issueless despair of a poor wretch arguing with a wall. He speaks, and they hear him; but he guesses they do not believe a word of what he says. His very entreaties go against him. He is aware of it. He tries to be calm; and then, furious at the impossibility of being calm, he falls, clasps his head in his hands, and weeps.

In the days of 'Ruy-Blas,' in the striking scene in the third act, where Don Salluste, dressed as a lacquey, compelled his valet, Ruy-Blas, to shut the window, it is said that the actor, Alexandre Mauzin, who played Salluste, and who sat in an arm-chair facing the public, while Frédéric, who stood behind him, walked to the back of the stage, saw at that moment, every night, the whole audience suddenly moved and then bursting out into vehement applause, without Frédéric's uttering a word.

Don Salluste, with his back turned to Ruy-Blas, could make out nothing, nor even guess by what admirable byplay the great actor thus carried away the public. One night Mauzin could not resist looking. Stooping, and turning his head, he beheld Frédéric motionless, horribly pale, hesitating to go to the window, crushed by the humiliation and weeping—weeping every night real tears, which slowly fell from his reddened eyelids. This gift of tears, this prodigious artistic faculty of identifying himself with a part, so as to *live it*, is possessed by no one to a like degree. We may say that he has actually and successively been Gennaro, Georges the Gambler, André Gérard, the Père Gachetta.

While Frédéric was playing in the 'Crime de Faverne,' all the actors of Paris who were not occupied at their own theatres went to hear the performer, who is still what he has always been—the grand master of dramatic art. Every one of his creations is a model for these new comers, who hardly take the trouble to study. They look upon him as he himself regarded Kemble, whose acting influenced him to a certain degree. Not that Kemble

had ever been his master. Men like Frédéric need no teacher; they have one constantly at hand—namely, nature.

Frédéric's great power lies in his continual and conscientious truthfulness—truth in his passion, truth both in his comic and his grander scenes. There is not one of those striking gestures which surprise you by their emphasis which has not been studied and copied from nature. He is a dramatic genius born, not full armed, like Minerva, from Jupiter's brain, but who has armed himself, little by little, with all the feverish sorrows in his own experience and the dramas of real life that have fallen in his way. His only professor has been, in fact, life. His conservatoire is the street or the saloon, any place where the collisions of love and hate cause passion to flash out like lightning. It is said that one day Lafontaine (who had been playing the 'Mis-anthrope' at the Comédie-Française with great success, and who admires Frédéric Lemaître almost to idolatry) called on the old hero and begged his counsels.

'What counsels would you have me give you?' Frédéric asked. 'The first person you happen to meet, if joyful or sad, and provided he manifest his sorrow or his joy, will give you more valuable hints than mine.'

'Nevertheless——'

'We artists can find only one true teacher, and this is our own proper heart. Come,' continued Frédéric, 'you wish me to give you a lesson. So be it; you shall have your lesson. Very well. You are returning home, in good spirits, satisfied with everything, after a pleasant evening, a dinner with friends—never mind what. You mount the staircase, smiling, before you see her, at your wife, who is awaiting you with open arms, and ready to give the usual kiss. You open the door, and enter; your wife is not there. You look about you, and find, on a table, a letter, in which she tells you that she has left you, that she will never return, and that it is useless to search after her retreat. Here is a situation.

How will you render it? Try it. I am all attention.'

Frédéric Lemaitre, quietly seated on his chair, regarded M. Lafontaine, who hesitated a little, feeling nervous in the great artist's presence. Perhaps he was also taken by surprise. Abrupt modes of teaching, like this, are unknown in the schools of declamation, where the professor lays the principal stress on the accent and the diction, implanting in his pupils a uniform mode of speech which, in the end, becomes fatiguing to the hearer, and busying himself with the gesture rather than the soul—with the style of walking more than the intensity of feeling. Lions only, like Frédéric, take the bull by the horns, or rather pin him by the nostrils.

Frédéric Lemaitre rose from his seat. 'Look,' he said to Lafontaine, 'how I should do it.'

And then, as if in the course of conversation, with his hands in his pockets, and without any of the resources of the theatre, he acted before wondering Lafontaine one of the most astounding scenes it is possible to witness. At first he was the happy, confiding husband, stepping up-stairs, humming a song. With a commonplace open countenance, and a half silly smile, he opens the door, draws a deep breath, rubs his hands. He is at home. He looks about him. Where is his wife? She has not sat up for him. Very extraordinary. Is she ill?—Note that Frédéric did not utter a single word; all this was expressed by his unaided pantomime.—He goes to the bed. Nobody. Has she gone out? He sits down; he will wait for her. He takes up a newspaper to while away the time.

But what is that letter on the side table in the corner? A letter; and a letter from her! Why should she write? What need can she have to write? The husband changes countenance. He guesses some misfortune. Yes; there is misfortune in that letter. He takes it, turns it about, dares not open it. He reads it, and falls in a fainting fit.

'These, my good friend, are the only counsels I can give you,' said Frédéric, rising. 'Lay your hand on your heart, and listen to its beatings.'

How often has Lafontaine related this visit, from which he retired at once, overcome, and filled with enthusiasm!

There is more than one point of resemblance between this scene thus improvised in a few minutes and the mad scene worked up and magnificently rendered by Frédéric in the 'Crime de Favertre.' The actor's art can hardly go further. This scene also was deplorably managed by the writers, and it required a very different degree of talent on the part of the actor to give it the power to which he raised it.

Maitre Séraphin is an elderly notary at Blois who had lost his wife a twelvemonth ago. He worships Thérèse's memory. He fears to make the sound of his footsteps heard in the chamber where she breathed her last. He preserves, as relics, a cap with pink ribbons, a neckerchief, a mantelet, and the watch she used to consult during her dying illness. Thérèse is enshrined in his memory as a saint, and his empty fireside still retains, as it were, the perfume of her angelic presence.

One day when Séraphin has shut himself up in that chamber, indulging in dreams of his bygone happiness, he hears in an adjoining apartment, which is the office occupied by his clerks, a song with a burthen to every verse, in which burthen his name is mentioned. He rises, walks in that direction, and listens. It shakes him like a clap of thunder. The singer is his head clerk, Joseph, whom he has brought up and treated almost like a son. Joseph, under the influence of drink, sings the story of his amours with his master's wife, and tells, to a vulgar *told-rol* tune, how Thérèse deceived Maitre Séraphin. The incident is improbable as well as revolting. Is it likely that a clerk, however great an ass he may be, should set his intrigues to scraps of street music for the entertainment of his fellow-scribes? And if you could only see

the clerk, and the heavy, callish, dolt-like character given by the actor to that personage! It is something hateful, repugnant, to see that fine old man, who is *Frédéric*, crowded over and turned to ridicule by such a low, contemptible fellow.

But you see *Frédéric*, you hear *Frédéric*, and the scene then becomes awfully terrible. It startles even practised playgoers. Hardly has Joseph finished the burthen of the last verse of the song—a song as cowardly as the serpent's hiss and as stupid as the goose's cackling—when *Séraphin* rushes at him, seizes him by the throat, and dashes him to the ground. Then, leaving him half strangled, *Frédéric* rises, runs to *Thérèse's* chamber, brings her ornaments, her caps and dresses, tearing and destroying them, throws them into the fire in a towering rage, and then with glaring open eyes gloats over them while they are being consumed.

It is almost carrying things too far; and the old man cannot burn at one stroke all that he has worshipped, without some sort of explanation and because a low scamp has insulted a woman's memory in dog-grel rhymes. *Séraphin*, adoring *Thérèse* as he does, ought not to believe that she could have betrayed him. But, we repeat, it is best not to look too closely at the situation, but to yield to *Frédéric's* influence.

After burning the dresses, he is going to throw a medallion into the fire. It is *Thérèse's* portrait. He checks himself. 'No,' he says. 'This was done after she was dead; and it was not the dead woman who deceived me!' *Frédéric* let those words escape him in an intensity of grief. He wept, he actually shed tears. Suddenly, he roused himself, came to the front of the stage reflecting, searching in his memory for the burthen of the song that Joseph had sung. He picks up the scraps bit by bit, recites them, sings them:

'C'était par devant notaire,
Dans l'étude de *Séraphin*'

He laughs a horrible laugh, ceases, presses his hands on his forehead, on which one of *Thérèse's* friends used often to say smiling (he did not

understand her then) that he had bumps. 'Certainly,' he exclaims, with a horrible outburst of grief, 'I have bumps on my forehead. True enough; I have bumps!'

Put those words into any other actor's mouth and the audience would laugh. 'His audience shuddered; they were afraid. It seemed as if *Frédéric* himself were really going mad in their presence. He returns to his song; he hums it, he shouts it; he marks the time with his body, with his arms; the tune appears to have bewitched him; he tries to dance, the unhappy wretch! He does dance in a pitiable fashion. He dances laughing the madman's nervous laugh which terrifies every one that hears it. His whole audience were overcome with fright.

Time passes. Joseph has sung his song, and it has had its consequences. The poor lunatic wanders about the streets of Blois, continually humming it, haunted by the burthen. The clerks find him sitting on a bench; they speak to him. He does not know them. Mistrusting them at first—and with what skill *Frédéric* depicts the madman's timidity!—he afterwards smiles at them. Then he suddenly starts to his feet, his countenance stamped with the expression of bitter sorrow. 'Would you live happily?' he says. 'Never love.' With *Frédéric*, the simplest words, the slightest exclamation, reveal the great artist.

The French stage finds room occasionally for foreign actors speaking either foreign tongues, or, like Charles Mathews, acting in French. The judgment that will be pronounced on their merits is not always easy to foresee. Success at home does not necessarily involve success in Paris; and *vice versâ*, mediocrities (so considered) at home occasionally find favour there. For instance, we are old enough to remember the applause bestowed on Miss Smithson and Mr. Abbot, neither of whom were considered at the head of their profession in London, but merely very respectable performers who never absolutely broke down or gave offence. The latter, gifted with a handsome person, had been looked upon as an exceedingly proper and

graceful walking gentleman; no more. On the other hand, the favourite German tenor who paid Paris a visit this winter did not do; and it has been said that Jenny Lind always avoided passing the ordeal of the Parisian public.

At the Théâtre Italien, in 1867, Mr Sothorn obtained a great success in 'Our American Cousin.' M. Jules Claretie very fairly criticises both the actor and the comedy, warning us not to take the latter as a first-rate sample of British dramatic art, in spite of its long-continued run. Its author, Tom Taylor, is the rival of Dion Boucicault, whose 'Jean la Poste' was admitted to be an excellent drama. Now 'Our American Cousin,' if offered to the Ambigu or the Gaité, would be sure to meet with a decided refusal.

The plot is quite childish and hopelessly commonplace. A cousin from America, a backwoodsman of Ohio, falls suddenly upon an English family whom he has unconsciously ruined by inheriting the fortune of their grandfather. He is insupportable, an unlicked bear, heavy, ill-bred. He gets up in the night to fire his revolver, and dislocates people's wrists when he shakes their hands; but he makes up for his roughness by his real services. He unmasks cheats, sends traitors about their business, unites lovers, and lights his cigar with the old gentleman's will. This succession of ill-managed incidents, clashing with one another, does not constitute even a second-class piece. Add Lord Dundreary to this farrago, and the jumble becomes a comedy of character. The author, however, may never have dreamt of such a personage. His merits as a writer are fully admitted. Nevertheless, as to 'Our American Cousin,' French judges say that without Mr. Sothorn it would not obtain a second hearing.

But we have seen what Frédéric Lemaître can do with an indistinct and sketchy part. The same with Sothorn. He has reduced 'Our American Cousin' to this single personage, whom he varies every evening, correcting and improving the portrait from day to day. In

England, thanks to him, Lord Dundreary has become a type, like Mayeux, Calino, or Joseph Prudhomme in France. He meets you everywhere—in journals, shop windows, and posters on walls. Dundreary personifies that fraction of the English aristocracy which affects to take no interest in anything, to ignore everything, and to despise everything. While certain noblemen boldly put themselves at the head of affairs and direct their course, the Dundreary family boast their complete indifference to social or political progress.

A fold in a rose-leaf, a harsh-sounding consonant, a breath, a nothing, painfully affect these British sybarites. They resemble the French Muscadins of the year III. in the way in which they dislocate and bone the language, replacing the *rs* by *ws*, drawing out their words, and saying, for example, 'Ya—a—as' for 'Yes.' All nations comprise specimens of that variety of the human race variously called 'dandies,' 'swells,' in France *gandins*, and more recently *petits crévés*, wearied and wearisome, worn out, used up, without muscles, heart, or good red blood. 'Punch' aptly hits off the style of things. 'Your ticket, if you please, sir,' asks a railway official. 'Very good,' replies the swell. 'But I am rather tired. Would you have the kindness to take it yourself out of my waistcoat pocket?'

This type, as we see, has had a great vogue. It has been handled in all sorts of ways. A volume might be filled with the jokes and stupidities laid to its account. It was in 1863 that Mr. Sothorn presented himself as Lord Dundreary to the London public. Henri Monnier had done the same in Paris with Joseph Prudhomme. Long before he played the 'Famille Improvisée' on the stage, he had amused his friends with the writing master's false collars and solemn talk. These petrifications of an actor in one single character are not without the disadvantages of unfitting him to represent any other. It is impossible to carry an incarnation farther. Who would guess the actor in the present personage? From head to foot he

is Lord Dundreary, an elegant sim-pleton, ridiculous and vain, yawning out his life, and rendered ugly, hideously ugly, by the pains taken to beautify himself. How perfectly everything in the swell is studied, from the affected walk to the little laugh which strongly resembles a turkey's gobble! How well the accessories are chosen in the toilette scene, where the dandy is surrounded by a treasury of hair brushes, dyes, pomades, and washes!

Moreover, say his French critics, Mr. Sothorn does not exaggerate or break out into caricature. He is conscientiously scrupulous in this respect. And then they point out the peculiarities of English art, which is singularly national in every branch. At an exhibition of paintings, when you walk through the galleries, you have no need to ask whether you are in the English section; you have only to look at the pictures. Everything in them is English, from the colour of the hair to the materials of the garments. You have crossed the Channel at a single bound, and are actually in England. The same is the case in theatrical matters. The pieces may be translated, adapted, imitated from a foreign stage; they are naturalised by the careful, excessively scrupulous fashion in which the actors get them up.

Madame Ristori's company was a striking instance how careless Italians are about the minor details of *mise en scène* and costume. The English genius reveals itself in exactly the opposite quality. Their actors play, as Frith and Mulready paint, without forgetting a slit in a pantaloon, a wrinkle in the corner of an eye, a grain of dust. Does the scenery represent a country nook? It resembles one of Constable's landscapes. Every pains is taken to render it more truthful and striking. The boards are covered with a carpet of green; the actresses who plays the farmer's wife washes her hands with soft soap. Nothing is neglected to complete the illusion, and everything recalls the actualities of life by a special and very attractive realism. One of Dickens's novels, a picture by

Millais, and an English comedy, produce the very same impression. The reason is that English art, in its most diverse manifestations, from literature to sculpture, has a national flavour, which is one of its merits as well as one of its faults. The audience, almost entirely English, showed how it appreciated this careful finish. Their applause was deafening. The French also applauded gallantly, to welcome the foreign artists. Moreover, Mr. Sothorn was supported by actors of talent. The gentleman who played the American cousin was very amusing and original, and the French were charmed, almost astonished, by the grace of Miss Rose Henney—another dramatic success abroad—who played a farmeress to the life, and admirably led off a 'national country dance,' which was encored.

Madame Ristori's second visit to Paris, in 1867, although her reputation was too well established to make it other than a success, could hardly be expected to turn out the triumph that it had been ten years previously, for the strange but simple reason that Rachel was dead. The Parisian public occasionally resembles those coquettes who offer their hand to an acquaintance solely to make another die of rage. There had been a rupture between it and Mademoiselle Rachel. All friendly relations were suspended. The tragedian had migrated from Paris to St. Petersburg, and gossips were not wanting who believed her capable of taking part in the Crimean war, and of siding with Russia against France. The public who had filled her pockets with national five-franc pieces bore her a grudge for accepting roubles from foreign hands. The breach, absurd as it may seem, was complete.

At that moment Madame Ristori appeared. She possessed, and still possesses, incontestable talent. They received her with open arms, and at once mounted her on a pedestal. Rachel received as so many stabs every round of applause bestowed on her rival, and the fame of Adelaïde Ristori swelled to hyperbolic proportions. Although their enthusiasm has since calmed down,

the Italian personator of Medea and Myrrha may lay claim to undisputed honours. As Elisabeth, Queen of England, Ristori was less effective than as Maria Stuarda. The haughty part of the virgin despot less accords with her powers than the resigned but still proud personage of her victim. She earned plenty of bouquets and bravos, and well deserved them. Like Frédéric, Madame Ristori is the soul of the piece; and when she is not on the stage, people look about the house and cease to listen. This may in some measure be the fault of her company, who, with two or three exceptions, were but moderate actors.

The Parisian public, moreover, has an eye as hard to please as their ear. They must have good scenery and an attempt at illusion. They will never admit, for instance, that Queen Elizabeth's court is composed of four men-at-arms and an equally considerable number of nobles. For some time past they have been unaccustomed to conventional troubadour costume, and the Italian way of getting up their pieces will always be apt to make them smile. In Italy they are not particular about local colouring. In changing the scenes, whether the story is laid in the middle ages or in classic antiquity, the furniture will be removed by footmen dressed in the laced liveries of Louis XV., and a really handsome scene will be spoiled by the introduction of an anachronism.

In Madame Ristori's company at the Théâtre Italien all the lords of Elizabeth's court were costumed as opera-singers. Others, in Maria Stuarda, clad in doublets of the sixteenth century, elbowed their comrades disguised as carnival mousquetaires. Then, as soon as their speech was declined, or their scraps of repartee thrown into the dialogue, they hastily set three steps backwards, and seemed to take no further interest in the action, exactly like a tenor who, as soon as he has sung his bravura, evidently manifests a strong desire to take refuge in the wings.

This is a general fault with most Italian actors. Their voice alone is animated. While their lips are

uttering warm protestations of love or deadly threats, their countenance remains calm and unmoved. Hardly do they knit their brows; there is no play of the physiognomy, very few gestures, for—with the exception of the Neapolitans and the national buffoons—the Italian actors are sober in their gestures to a degree which surprises those who expect some marked manifestation of southern passion.

It has been asked, Why need they trouble themselves about gestures, when their harmonious language adapts itself so admirably to the expression of every emotion? Telegraphic movements were invented to help those who cannot speak to each other. But the great majority of Italian actors are far too dependent upon the prompter. They have either not the time or the industry to get their parts properly by heart; and our own theory is, that the attention which ought to be bestowed in suiting the action to the word is entirely occupied in catching the words as supplied by the prompter.

Often their utterance is a sort of recitative, which is not without its charm, causing you even to forget the deficiencies of their scenery or rendering scenery unnecessary. In day theatres, as in the old Roman amphitheatre at Verona, they play whole dramas in the open sunshine, almost without a back scene, with no paint on the actors' cheeks, and in any procurable costume. The audience, seated on the rough stone steps, cares little about the decorations or the dresses. It listens to the music of Italian speech, and is as much touched by professions of affection and cries of despair as it could be by theatrical performances conducted in the usual way. It forgets, or is ignorant of, dramatic conventionalities; whereas in Paris the least solecism which strikes the eye offends as much as a fault in speaking would shock the ear. Thus, for instance, when the Parisians see Elizabeth, Queen of England, enter, and hear her speak French, the thing seems quite natural; whilst they are, if not shocked, at least surprised to hear the same English

Elizabeth speak Italian. In like manner they distort 'London' into 'Londres'—and indeed take the same liberties with almost all proper names—but they smile when Italians presume to call Paris 'Parigi.' Why do, not only Madame Ristori, but also her companions, appear superior in Medea and Myrrha? The reason is that, in antique subjects,

the spectator is out of his depth, and avows his ignorance. He is not then offended by details which may or may not be incorrect, Tragedy having long accustomed him to an idealised theatre, which he accepts as traditional and without requiring an inventory of its wardrobe.

THE STORY OF A CASHMERE SHAWL.

I WAS travelling down country from 'the Hills,' or, as we should less irreverently say in England, the Himalaya Mountains. I was halting at Meerut, which, as everybody knows, is the best station in the North Western Provinces. I had put up at the dāk bungalow, which, as everybody knows also, is a resting-house for travellers by the road. People go by the rail now, and dāk bungalows have nearly disappeared, so I may as well mention what the place was like.

Outside you saw simply a low house with a high roof, the latter covered with thatch; a verandah in the front and rear, supported by pillars covered with a hard composition called chunam; openings serving the double purpose of doors and windows, guarded by green blinds, called *jilmils* in India and *jalousies* in France, and not called at all in England, where they are little known; the whole standing in an enclosure, known as a compound, containing little else than a cook-house and a couple of huts for servants. Inside you find yourself in one of the two principal apartments—as dreary a place as could conveniently be made of four whitewashed walls, a chunam floor, and a ceiling of stretched canvas, threatening to give way in some places, and flapping unpleasantly whenever the wind blows. A rough table of toon wood, three chairs, and the chronic bedstead of the country, called a *churpy*, completes the furniture of the place, with the exception of a little bookcase against the wall, where a tract society deposits some

improving publications for the use of travellers.

I had taken my bath in the adjoining little den devoted to the purpose (that is to say, I had poured a dozen chatties of water over my head, in the primitive fashion of the country), and was lounging in the verandah, in an elegant *négligé* costume, while the khansamah was preparing the inevitable spatchcock, eggs, and tea for my breakfast, when I heard the sound of hoofs, and immediately saw a stranger, who rode into the compound and saluted me.

He was a fine-looking Englishman, unexceptionably mounted, and dressed in a style which in England we should consider a cross between a cricketer and a shooting costume.

'I am speaking, I think, to Mr. —,' said he.

I bowed acquiescence.

'I was in here an hour ago, making some inquiries about a murder which has taken place not far off—I saw your name on your baggage, but would not disturb you then. You have not breakfasted, I hope. My name is Welwyn.'

I knew the name well—it was that of a high official of the station, and we both belonged to the same service. The result of a short conversation was, that I made the khansamah a present of my breakfast, and had myself and my baggage removed to the house of my new acquaintance.

Such a charming house it was. Nothing like the dāk bungalow, you may be sure. It stood in a garden

rich with foliage and flowers. It was of very large size, though it had no upper story, and was surmounted by the usual thatched roof. The rows of open *jilmils* on the two sides presented to view indicated a large amount of interior accommodation, and you could see some of the apartments inside through the *chicks* used to keep out the flies. The front verandah was of enormous size, and peopled by a little colony of servants—*chupprassies*, bearers, and a couple of *ayahs*—to say nothing of a native sentry who paced up and down. All rose as we approached and made their salaams, even to a tailor who was seated in a corner engaged with some gauzy articles of female costume. It was a very prosperous-looking mansion in every respect; and the impression was completed when we entered the drawing-room, which was luxuriously furnished, adorned everywhere with flowers, and enriched with works of art upon the walls—objects not very common in the upper provinces of India.

Half reclining on an ottoman was a lady, reading a novel. Such a charming lady! I knew her well by reputation as the beauty of the station—everybody hears of everybody else in India, so that they are in the same presidency. But I was not prepared to find the reputation so well deserved, for ladies are so revered among Anglo-Indians that their charms are apt to get exaggerated by description. Not that she was a person to take your admiration by storm. Hers was a pretty little compact style of beauty, and one of her chief charms was a pervading expression of indolence which centered itself in her eyes. But it was the indolence of command, and I soon found that Mrs. Welwyn was thoroughly accustomed to have her own way. She was quite young, I may also remark, and had been only two years in the country.

Her husband presented me in due form, and then hurried away, to make his toilette for breakfast. We were complete friends by the time he returned. I had learned many personal particulars concerning her-

self, and was placed in possession of a very fair summary of her tastes and opinions: on the other hand, I had imparted as much about myself as was likely to convey a flattering impression, and had of course mentioned, among other things, that I was on my way home to England.

This gave Mrs. Welwyn an idea. During breakfast she said—

‘Charles, as Mr. — is going home, he can take that shawl for Sophie. She is my favourite sister, and you know I promised her faithfully.’

You see this imperious lady did not consider it necessary to request my services.

“That” shawl has first to be procured,’ remarked her husband.

‘Oh! that is easy.’ To a *chupprassie* who had just brought in a note, ‘Cashmere ka Kuppra wallah bulao.’

‘I will see if it is of any use to call him,’ said her husband; ‘but I think there is a good man in the bazaar.’ And he gave some more definite directions to the attendant.

In less than an hour a travelling merchant, well known in the station, made his appearance in the verandah, accompanied by two coolies carrying large bales of merchandize. A great cloth was spread upon the ground, and upon this his wares were soon unrolled and displayed to the best advantage.

I admired one in which I thought the colours were particularly well harmonized. Mrs. Welwyn tossed it aside, saying—

‘Oh! that is not of the best kind. You see it is worked upon a plain material, on one side. The woven ones—those that have the pattern and the fabric all woven together—those are the best.’

‘They are certainly the most expensive,’ said her husband, drily; ‘the best of these will cost three thousand rupees.’

The merchant nodded his head.

‘Oh! speak in pounds,’ said the little lady.

‘Well, three hundred pounds.’

And the merchant explained that if specially ordered they might be made to cost a great deal more, the manufacturers being very complai-

sant in this respect. But you may get a very good woven shawl for a hundred pounds, and prices range below that. A good worked shawl may be had for as little as twenty pounds.

In the course of the conversation that followed—madame was a long time making her choice—I picked up many particulars concerning Cashmere shawls, which I have verified by subsequent reference to authorities. In the first place, they do not all come from Cashmere. A considerable proportion of this manufacture is now carried on in British territory. Between thirty and forty years ago it was entirely confined to Cashmere. But a terrible famine visited the land, and, in consequence, numbers of the shawl-weavers emigrated to the Punjab, and settled in Umritzur, Nurgpur, Dinangar, Tilaknath, Jellapur, and Loodianah, in all of which places the manufacture continues to flourish. The best shawls of Punjab manufacture are made at Umritzur, which is also an emporium of the trade. But none of these can compete with the best shawls made in Cashmere itself. This is partly because the Punjab manufacturers are not able to obtain the finest species of wool, and partly on account of the inferiority of their dyeing, the excellence of which, in Cashmere, is attributed to some chemical peculiarity in the water.

The raw woollen substances used in the manufacture of Cashmere shawls and other articles of dress of the same description are six in number. There is, in the first place, the *Pushum*, or shawl wool, properly so called, which is a downy substance, found next to the skin and below the thick hair of the Tibetan goat. It is of three colours—white, drab, and dark lavender. The best kind is produced in the semi-Chinese provinces of Turfan Kiehar, and exported, *via* Yarkand, to Cashmere. All the finest shawls are made of this wool, but as the Maharajah of Cashmere keeps up a strict monopoly of the article, the Punjab shawl-weavers have to be content with an inferior kind of *Pushum*, produced at Chatan.

The price of white *Pushum* at Cashmere is from three to four shillings a pound for uncleaned, and from six to seven shillings a pound for cleaned.

Next on the list is the fleece of the Dumba sheep of Caubul and Peshawur. It is used in the manufacture of the finer sorts of chogas—a choga being an outer cloak or robe, with sleeves, worn by Afghans, and other Mahomedans of the western frontier. This is sometimes called *Caubuli Pushum*.

Thirdly we come to the *wahab shaki*, or *Kirman* wool. This is the wool of a sheep found in Kirman, a tract of country in the south of Persia, by the Persian Gulf. It is used for the manufacture of a spurious kind of shawl cloth, and for adulterating the texture of Cashmere shawls.

Next we find the hair of a goat common in Caubul and Peshawur, called *Put*, from which a texture called *Puttoo* is made.

The woolly hair of the camel supplies the material for a coarser kind of choga.

Lastly, we come to the wool of the country sheep of the plains.

The adulteration of the best wool with that of inferior kinds has been largely practised of late years, and dealers have made many complaints on the subject. One of the worst effects of this adulteration is the shrinking of those portions of the garment in which it is employed after exposure to the action of water. In Cashmere there are severe penal restrictions to the practice; and in our own territories a Company or Guild has been formed to authenticate the genuine articles by means of trade marks, the imitation of which may be punished by law.

For the preparation of the shawl wool great care is necessary. The first operation is cleaning it. This is generally performed by women. The best kind is cleaned with lime and water, but ordinary wool is shaken up with flour. The next process is that of separating the hair from the *pushum*. It is a very tedious operation, and the value of the cloth subsequently

manufactured varies with the amount of care bestowed upon it. The wool thus cleaned and sorted is spun into thread with the common *churka*, or native spinning machine. This is also a process requiring great care. White *pushmesu* thread of the finest quality will sometimes cost as much as 2*l.* 10*s.* a pound. The thread is next dyed, and is then ready for the loom.

The spinning, like the cleaning, is principally performed by women, of whom, some years ago, no less than a hundred thousand were said to be employed in this manner. Girls begin at the age of ten. They commence their employment at day-break, working with but little intermission during the day, and sometimes far into the night—especially when the moonlight enables them to save the expense of oil lamps. This is a prosaic state of existence suggestive rather of Manchester than Cashmere—

* With its roses the brightest the earth ever gave,
Its temples and grottoes and fountains as clear
As the love-lighted eyes that hang over their
wave.

In Cashmere there is no Ten Hours Bill, and the 'love-lighted eyes' have to hang for very long hours over work for which their owners get very poorly paid—albeit the payment is on a regulation scale, and adapted to the mode of life and requirements of the population.

A dealer called a *Puimungu* keeps a shop for the purchase of yarn, and he also sends people to collect it from the houses of the spinners, his emissaries giving notice of their approach by the sound of a bell. The yarn is then sold to the weavers. Having ascertained the pattern most likely to suit the market, the weaver applies to persons whose business it is to apportion the material according to the colours required; and when this is settled he takes it to another, whose function it is to divide it into skeins of the necessary proportions. When thus prepared it is delivered to the *Rungrez*, or dyer. When the body of the cloth is to be left plain the second quality of yarn is alone given to be dyed. This is generally of about the thickness of common cotton sewing

thread, is of a coarser quality than the yarn used for the cloth, and is prepared for employment in flowers or other ornaments—which are intended to stand higher, and be, as it were, embossed upon the ground.

The first operation of the dyer is to steep the yarn in cold water. He professes to be able to give it sixty-four tints, most of which are permanent. Each has a separate denomination; thus the crimson is called *Gulanar*, the name of the pomegranate flower. Of this dye the best kind is that derived from cochineal imported from Hindustan; inferior tints are from lac and *ehermes*; logwood is used for other red dyes. Blues and greens are dyed with indigo, or colouring matter made by boiling down European broad cloth. Logwood and indigo are imported. Carmathus and saffron, which grow in Cashmere, furnish tints of orange, yellow, &c. The whiter and finer the fibre of the wool, and the finer the yarn into which it is made, the more capable is it of receiving a brilliant dye; and this is one reason why the fine white wool of the goat is preferred to that of sheep. The occupation of a dyer, I may here mention, is always hereditary.

The yarn next passes into the hands of a person called the *Nakutu*, who adjusts it for the warp and the weft. That intended for the former is double, and is cut into certain lengths, anything short of which is considered fraudulent. The number of these lengths varies from two to three thousand, according to the closeness or openness of the texture proposed, and the fineness or coarseness of the yarn. The weft is made of yarn which is single, but a little thicker than the double yarn or twist of the warp. The weight of the weft is estimated at double that of the warp. The *Nakatu* receives the yarn in hanks, but returns it in balls; he can prepare in one day the warp and weft for two shawls. Next comes a functionary called by the alarming name of the *Pennukunguru* (which merely means warp-dresser), who takes from the weaver the yarn which has been cut and reeled, and, stretching the

lengths by means of sticks into a band, of which the threads are slightly separate, dresses the whole by dipping it into thick boiled rice-water. After this the skein is slightly squeezed, and again stretched into a band, which is brushed and suffered to dry. By this process every length becomes stiffened and set apart from the rest.

For the warp on the border of the shawl silk is generally employed; and it has the advantage of showing the darker colours of the dyed wool more prominently than a warp of yarn, as well as hardening and strengthening and giving more body to the edge of the cloth. When the border is very narrow it is woven with the body of the shawl, but when broader it is worked on a different loom, and afterwards sewn to the edge of the shawl by the *Rafugar*, or fine-drawer, with the nicety which belongs to his craft. The silk is twisted for the border warp by a person called the *Tubgar*. By him it is handed to the *Alakaband*, who reels it and cuts it into the proper lengths. The operation of drawing, or passing the yarns through the heddles, is performed in the same manner as in Europe; and the warp is then taken by the *Shal-baf*, or weaver, to the loom. The weavers are all males, and they begin to learn their art at the age of ten years. The loom does not differ in principle from the looms of Europe, but is of inferior workmanship. A large establishment has perhaps three hundred looms, which are generally crowded together in long, low apartments. When the warp is fixed in the loom, the pattern-drawer (I will spare the reader more native names) and the persons who determine the proportions of the different colours in the yarn, are again consulted. The first brings the drawing of the pattern in black and white. One of the latter, having carefully considered it, points out the disposition of the colours, beginning at the foot of the pattern; calling out the colour, the number of threads to which it is to extend, that by which

it is to be followed, and so on in succession, until the whole pattern has been described. From his dictation his companion writes down the particulars in a kind of shorthand, and delivers a copy of the document to the weavers.

The needles—which are without eyes—are made of light smooth wood, and have both their sharp ends slightly charred, to prevent them from becoming rough or jagged through working. They are armed each with coloured yarn of about four grains weight, and then the weavers, under proper inspection, knot the yarn of the *tupi* to the warp. The face of the cloth is placed next to the ground, the work being carried on at the back, on which hang the needles in a row—differing in number from four to fifteen hundred, according to the lightness or heaviness of the embroidery. As soon as the inspector is satisfied that the work of one line or woof is completed, the comb is brought down upon it with a vigour and repetition apparently very disproportionate to the delicacy of the materials.

The shawls, when finished, are submitted to the cleaner, whose business is to free it from discoloured hairs, or yarn, and from ends or knots. Sometimes he pulls these objects out severally with a pair of tweezers; at others he shaves the reverse face of the cloth with a sharp knife; and any defects arising from either operation are at once repaired. At this stage of the manufacture the shawls are sent to the collector of the Stamp Duties, by whom an *ad valorem* duty of twenty-six per cent. is levied, and each piece is then stamped and registered. The goods are now handed over to the capitalist, who has advanced money on them to the manufacturer, and to the broker, and these two settle the price and effect the sale to the merchant. The capitalist charges interest on his advances, the broker a commission varying from two to five per cent. The purchaser takes the goods unwashed, and perhaps in pieces, and the fine-drawer and the washerman have still to do their parts. When

always something to praise; you obtained an honorary Fourth; or the examiner thanked you;—or looked as though he would have liked to thank you, had he not felt bashful. Applause, where this is anyhow possible: sometimes, indeed, a sad, rebuking silence; sometimes (ah, rarely, from the kind home-hearts, at least!) hissing, execration.

How delightful, however, to leave the stage as a 'well-graced actor.' 'Not void of righteous self-applause,' no doubt. But still more blessed in the proud and happy look of the father, at the return home—the father that had so faithfully and self-denyingly pinched and saved to send his bonny boy into the world well equipped for the battle of life; to send him out a gentleman and a scholar, with the chance (until our Universities have been *liberalised* down to infidelity) of being an intelligent Churchman too. And now his wistful longings, lookings, expectings, have not been disappointed. Heartily could he enjoy the minor triumph of seeing him smiting Cambridge to leg and to off, and far away beside frantic long-on, at Lord's, or of seeing him stand on the shore, flushed with toil and triumph, stalwart, brave, and lithe, and fit to row another mile yet, when the gallant light-blue had just rowed by, fagged and dejected. Heartily might the appreciative father enter into such excitements as these, seeing that they were but preludes to that great day when trembling hands were opening a letter, on which 'All right!' had been thoughtfully written, and which announced that the young fellow had been placed in the First Class. Oh, the greeting when he came home, with another first added to that—a double first-class man!

No doubt it was delightful, that expected moment of the coming out of the list; that first exhilaration, that writing off the good news just in time for post; those congratulations of tutors, and the cheers of the fellows at the farewell supper. No doubt it was a day to be remembered all through life, that day of the B.A. degree; the entering the

Schools clad in the wisp of gown which Dons insist on undergraduates wearing in its undeveloped scantiness (chiefly, it seems to me, after careful research, because the men object to the garment)—the entering the Schools, I say, thus habited, and, after a brief ceremony, emerging to surrender to the obsequious scout the tattered fragment which was the badge of the undergraduate, and then to stalk proudly forth into the Oxford streets robed in the full and flowing garb of the Bachelor. Was not this a delightful day? Better far than that forlorn Master's Degree, over two years after, when all the old faces are away, and never a welcome found in so much as one of the old rooms. There are, you see, for the Bachelor, still most of the old band; and hearty sympathies, and stalwart pats on the back, and vehement bravoos are all at his beck and call. Was not that, then, a delightful day, when he became a Graduate of Oxford; when he could look back upon Examinations, small moderate, and great, as henceforth things of the past; when the B.A. importance was yet a new thing; and all the laurels of the crown fresh and unfaded; and the young success a delight never failing, a thing deliciously to call to mind at first waking in the morning, and at certain luxuriously complacent moments of meditation during the day?

Delightful the sweets of success, while the Term yet lasted, and among the band of University friends. But not in the least comparable to the delight of the home greeting. No, no. The anticipation, the delicious musing during that swift hour's speeding from Reading to London; the arrival, with fluttered heart;—the welcome. Sisters proud and appreciative; brothers admiring and vociferous; the dewy gleam in the father's eye, his wring of the hand, with but little said. Only, in the evening, while the cosy party are gathered about the fire, and there has been a few minutes' reflective silence, a simple speech that touches the young man's heart with its pathetic revelation of the depth of the

father's grateful pride, '*I wish dear *** was here.*' But the mother never lived to see her first-born, her darling, even into his teens. Does she look on? Can she know? Does the uttered wish, that betrays the void in the father's heart, in this hour of his joy, bring any glow of gladness to her spirit, because she may perceive that the remembrance of her, the want of her, still tarry upon the earth?

However these things be, there is no doubt about the sweetness of this hour to the hero of the evening. Is it not well repaid, the self-denial (it was, often, stern self-denial), the hard work, which have resulted in so much happiness, such joy given and received? Ah, he might have had more of enjoyment (falsely so called) had he frittered away his University career in amusement and extravagance; and he might have escaped reproach on his return, after the bare degree, hardly got at last—he might have escaped reproach from the sad-thoughted father. But now were not any pains worth while, to have been the cause of that quiet, thankful joy, too deep for many words, which lights up that father's face, as he meditatively thrums on the table, looking absorbedly into the glow and dance of the Christmas fire? Ah, if young men would think! But they very often will not. How many are even now so living their short University life that in the years to come, often, often, a shade will come over the face at the remembrance of it, and often the vain and sorrowful wish rise from the heart near to the lips, 'Ah, how I wish that I had those grand opportunities again!'

It is, to a tender, thoughtful heart, even pathetic to watch for long and meditate upon an assemblage of the young fellows; fair, open faces, fresh young cheeks, the glow of health unquenched, smooth brows, vigorous limbs; and minds in tune with the health and young life of the body. Richly endowed with that portion of goods which fell to them from the Father's store, but, in too many cases, not contented to enjoy it under His wise and kind direction: no, they must go out and

away from that, and squander them in the vain world. Health and joyousness and light heart and innocent mind and energy and fire and impulse and vigour: soon all spent, and nought to show for the spending. Then the famine—then the famine! And, *perhaps*, the return after all. But, ah, how much better to have kept at home, and to have saved this harm and loss! Not an utter wreck; that is much; but we had rather have seen the brave vessel sailing into port, not indeed spared by storms and hard weather, but having nobly over-ridden them; a veteran, but not a dismasted hull, only just towed in from destruction.

But I may end these meditations with some verses which seem to the point. Verses written by this humble pen, for noble music, to which they were married by a college friend. They who please may hear them sung, next May the 10th, in St. James's Hall, as a chorale, in a noble Oratorio which will on that day be first performed for a noble cause. The name of the Oratorio being, '*The Return of the Prodigal.*' The words are those of a chorus of Angels.

'Father, scorned and alighted,
Dost Thou see Thy child?
Life's fair promise blighted
Once that gaily smiled.
Hope and strength and gladness
Spent, all spent and gone,
Dull despair and madness
Claim him for their own.

'All the joy and laughter
Spent and hushed and dead;
All the deep peace after,
Spent:—for ever fled!
Youth's quick faith and pleasure,
Energy and glow,
All that first rich treasure
Spent:—and nought to show!

'We, Thy sons, Thine Angels,
We, the elder Host,
We would sing evangel
To the lone and lost;
We, Thy children, Father!
Safe within Thy Home;
Therefore yearn the rather
Over those that roam.

'Lo! a hunger ever
Gnaweth at his soul;
Earthly banquets never
Can its want control;

Ah, that want, God-given
Child of the Divine!
Asks the Bread of Heaven,—
Not the food of swine.

Father, art Thou calling,
Calling home the lost?
Is Thy sunshine falling
On the winter-frost?
Father, look upon him,
Wandering and beguiled;
Thou hast not foregone him,
Still is he Thy child!

Father! There is silence,
Deep and still and dread;
Earnest, eager silence,
Till the word be said:
SAVED! He is forgiven!—
Million harps should raise,
Pealing through high Heaven,
Ecstasies of praise!

College friends. Ay, [this poem-let comes in *apropos* of my theme. How little I knew, when in my own Freshman's Term I was horrified by the news that the freshman who had taken the next rooms to mine was expecting the arrival of a piano; how little I knew the delights in store for me! With a cold shudder I anticipated the slow torture of 'scales,' or of 'exercises,' or the still more excruciating anguish of the continual murder of sweet or grand music. But Mendelssohn's and Beethoven's exquisite masterpieces, rendered by subtlest hands, and a kindred and fully appreciative mind, were, instead, to be my happy portion. Nor were pieces of his own composing, I soon found, unworthy even to alternate with these creations. Beethoven's 'Sonata Pathétique,' and that duet between the bass and treble, one of the 'Songs without Words,' were the first dispellers of my fears concerning that piano. How I learned to love them! Nor has my appreciation the least chilled, nor would, did I hear them every night of my life. How perfect that love-poem of Mendelssohn's! How the earnest notes express the strength and sweetness and depth of man's character, answering gravely to the trusting, gentle, tender pleading of the soft woman-treble. But none, to my mind, ever renders and interprets Mendelssohn as did that college friend of mine, save that the

gentle empress of my own piano has lovingly indulged me by careful study of the—trick would be quite the wrong word—manner, then, of the setting forth the master's music. Rather, however, this consummate playing was simply the catching the maker's meaning in his work.

After a hard day's reading in the maturer Oxford life, just when he fancied my wearied head was laid on the pillow, he (knowing my fancy) would often go to the piano, and soothe my tired senses, and summon rest to my busy mind, and exorcise dark fears concerning the next examination, and banish gnawing crowds of irregular verbs, or perplexing syllogisms, or knotty passages, or tiresome, slippery dates, or subtleties of philosophy, as the case might be. They would lull their weary solicitude, at the potent spell, and I could sink to sleep in an atmosphere of delicious sounds that, as with angel-wings, fanned and cooled my hot and tired brain.

His room and mine are of the old haunts among which memory best loves to linger; and I have but to shut my eyes, and behold, I am again in that familiar room, an honoured and indulged guest, leaning back in his easy-chair. And he sits with his grave face towards the piano, and all the attendant spirits that wait at his beck and obey his summons are making the hour delicious, and dispelling care and anxiety.

College friends. Thus harmonious are my reminiscences of one of them. But, at the word, a cluster of them starts out bright in memory's sky. There is Barton, thin and pale, appreciative of poetry, delighted, on his first call, at seeing Tennyson on my shelves. He comes in and takes his place often, of a morning, on my reclining chair, while I am finishing my breakfast. I have safely landed my egg out of the saucepan, boiled, or (I soared so far) poached on a piece of toast; my tea is made; a friendly book perched on its desk by my plate; I have come in from chapel, and there is, this morning, no lecture for me. Then arrives the well-known tap at the door, the

familiar sociable face; the cosy breakfast chat. Oxford talks seem like no other talks, as Oxford friends are like no other friends. Life seems so to be a thing outspread before us, at that time; we are standing on the brink for the plunge into the buffeting waters, but they do not seem to us, as we stand impatient, exultant there, other than smooth and glittering, or if they do, we glory in the prospect of battling with their fury. All before us; untried, new, exciting; (to change our simile), the time—

• When, wide in soul and bold of tongue,
Among the tents we paused and sung,
The distant battle flashed and rung.

• We sung the joyful psalm clear,
And sitting, burnished without fear
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

• Waiting to strive a happy strife,
To war with falsehood to the knife,
And not to lose the good of life.

Yes, all lay before us: if a strife, a *happy* strife; not the weary sobbing contest with dogged Evil, the dreadful Inkerman nights and days which grim experience brought to us. So we chatted, so we hoped. Both also, of course, in love: his love dawning, and he delighting to dwell upon the sweet present, the ecstatic Future. Ah! it is but last year that he buried dear wife and only child, and started afresh with a new loneliness of life; a loneliness perceived now, as it had not been before:

• For a sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering happier things.

Then, again, both looking forward to taking Holy Orders. And how bright the prospect! How dear, how delicious the thought of that noblest of work! How wise we would be; how zealous; what deep Divines; what earnest Parish Priests! There would, we knew of course, be obstacles, difficulties,—nay, if not, what sphere for noble work?—for tact, for zeal, for unconquerable patient love? But a bright golden haze mellowed with a tender unreality, all that uncertain, dimly-seen future at which we used to gaze so cheerily, so longingly, in those old Oxford days, in those old Oxford rooms. Ah, how different real war-

fare from anticipated warfare! How different real deeds from pictured deeds! How different experience from romance! Yet, although the golden haze soon lifted from the fields when we entered them and encamped in them, which of us would, had we our choice to make again, for even one half moment reconsider it? Which of us would not, in sadness, reach out our hands even yet more eagerly, for that which we grasped in the joyousness of hopeful inexperience?

Lately, at dinner with a friend, I heard the remark made that no one ought to take Holy Orders unless his father or friends were certain to be able to procure him a 'Living' in due time. Now I hate the word, *Living*; it is a grovelling name for such a charge as is that of a Cure of souls. I created a smile by the warmth with which I broke in, declaring that if I knew at the outset that my only boy would remain all his life a Curate with 80*l.* a year, I would choose that life for him before the proudest other position the world had to offer. And so I would. We clergymen are to blame for seeming to talk and think so much of 'Preferment' (hateful word!). It seems too hideous to suppose that reticence, in times and crises that need outspoken speech, can ever have anything to do with the thought and expectation of this. That mouths watering for bishoprics or deaneries can thus be prevented from pealing forth trumpet utterances that would be *imprudent*. Yet the fear cannot be banished that thus the case sometimes is. And what must the laity think? Are the sneers about the loaves and fishes quite and always undeserved? Oh, vile and abject condition of things! Oh for a few more Denison and Burgon spirits! The 'cold shade' under which they may lie shall be lifted one day. Then shall they *shine forth as the sun*.

But Barton has finished his weed (he sometimes indulged in that bad habit, not only of smoking, but of smoking in the morning), and I my breakfast. So I start out of the reverie into which I fell while he

was studying some examination-papers for 'Mods' (which agreeable employment loomed in the horizon;) and leave Thomas to clear my table for work. O those examination-papers! does not a thrill come over us as we recall our anxious perusal of them, and markings of this point and that, which had been evidently intended to 'stump' the hapless victims of their extinct fury? And a cold shudder ran down the back, as we felt that fresh ones, yet unborn, and unguessed at, lurked in the minds of examiners, to be, one dreadful day, set face to face with ourselves! What a pensive moment is that in which, in after-life, we take out those magic slips of paper, the four 'Testamurs.' What memories of confident or anxious waiting; of the joyous step of the friend coming into our room with them! What a pleasant warmth down the back, and kindly self-complacency in the heart, as we meet the congratulations of the men in Hall! What a bright glow seems to light the streets and buildings as we walk out into them;—'the very Schools appear to smile.' But how long ago now since all that was over!

Pass we on, however, to other College friends. One, a Professor now at Oxford; then, a double First-class man of our Hall; a pride for us and for him. Not at first a College friend: too much my Senior when I came; too great a man. But he has instituted a Debating society to be held in our dining-hall, and he is to open it with a debate on 'Tennyson, whether or no he be worthy the name of a true Poet?'

Barton and I are, need I say? roused men at this. What though he be a Graduate who leads the attack, and we but junior men? If no worthier champion arise, ourselves shall stand in the gap. And in truth there was little doubt that we should have to do so, for, sooth to say, few were the students and appreciators of the great poet in our community at that time; and, say what we would, we well knew that the dead-weight of our opponents' opinion would probably prevail to turn the scale against our arguments. Still, we would 'keep the

bridge' against whatever odds. Barton should lead, and I should second the defence.

The evening came: the attack was made; the poetry itself, and the sentiment of the poetry furiously assailed. Barton replied at great length, interspersing his speech with many quotations, but these running much upon the subject of love, to which weakness or strength the speaker was accredited with a strong bias, more merriment was provoked than perhaps was well for the weighing of grave argument. Which, however, was borne with imperturbable good-humour, and much applause followed the sitting down of the Tennysonian champion. The debate was adjourned, on the motion of another of the assailants. I was to reply to him.

One's first speech in public!—especially to an Oxford public!—it must be owned to be an anxious matter. Should I stick? Should I break down? For one can have no possible idea of whether the faculty of fluent public speech is in any degree possessed until a trial has been made. And many will sympathise in the solicitude with which I looked forward to what was to be my maiden effort.

Behold, however, the Hall filled with a goodly gathering; even a Master of Arts there—to undergraduates, a kind of superior being; one of those who 'Live and lie reclined on the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind; for they lie beside their nectar, and the clouds are lightly curled.' Well; one of them was of the audience. The adjourner of the debate made a speech *apropos* of nothing; and, upon his sitting down, I found that the inevitable moment had come for me to make my first appearance as a debater. Perhaps the less said about it the soonest mended. Enough to say that, certain kind applause helping me on, I did not, at least, stick fast, or break down. I remember to this day (our earliest successes or, at least, *non-failures*, have a sweetness about them which no after, even if really great, success can command), I remember to this day the gratification with which the applause filled my heart, when I

had sat down, after some such magnificent peroration as this—

'To those who have read this poet, and yet love him not;—who have, nevertheless, like my opponent, proved themselves to be of first-class—nay, of *Double First-class*—ability' (here the applause was vociferous), 'to these I can only express my regret that they and I should be on opposite sides in this debate.

'To those who are non-appreciative because they have not read Tennyson—and this is a large class—I will quote the words of the Editors of Shakespeare: "Read him, therefore; and again, and again; and if then you do not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him."

'To those—and I am sure there are none here—who simply have not the power to appreciate true poetry, and who bay, like dogs, at the sound of sweet music, I can only say, in the words of the mighty poet himself, "Let them rave!"

Poor claptrap, of course; but many a speech more applauded than was my humble maiden effort is even composed of the same material. And have I ever forgotten the modicum of applause then accorded? or the compliment of my senior foe, upon the 'skill and power of mind' which I had displayed? or his coming to me next morning to urge me to read for Honours instead of the modest Pass to which alone I aspired? Pshaw! this seems absurd, egoistic; but it is not so. I write to the public, and merely as one of the public. For have we not all had our first successes (however crude), and our first glow at them, never equalled, I say, by the more sober triumphs of maturer years? Are not the achievements, the disappointments, of youth far more keenly, if less deeply and lastingly felt, than those of the Summer or waning Autumn of life?

'*Ἄνδρ' ἀριστεῖν, καὶ δειρόχον ἔμμεναι ἑλλῶν*'

we learn in truth that there is something nobler than this, as life's sad earnest sifts us. But the desire to excel, to win praise, in some degree to rise to notice among our equals—this is the natural desire of the heart

in youth. And a slight success, a little wind of applause, is unspeakably dear to us, when neither we nor the world yet know of what we are made, nor whether or no there be in us any sterling stuff.

So, to this very day, there is a pleasure in recalling that evening of first debate, and this notwithstanding the sad fact that weighted down, as I contended, by the name of a double first-class man, the majority went against us! Still, however, the Poet sits on his throne, and added laurels, since that day, have graced his kingly brow. And my opponent has gained a professorial chair, and is the writer of that admirable book, 'Constitutional Progress,' so useful a *résumé* of the history of the constitution of this great country; and this from a stanch Church point of view. And for myself, I sit contented in the study in my country curacy, not otherwise known to fame than as the modest author of 'The Harvest of a Quiet Eye.'

Well, reminiscences of College friends must take, of necessity, rather a personal complexion. Let me pass on to another friend—another episode in the pleasant three years.

A rare specimen of humanity was Edgar Atheling, with a peculiar genius for getting into, and out of, rows with proctors, examiners, whom not. He it was who first of all entered my rooms, on the evening of my arrival as a Freshman, and as he often appealingly reminded me afterwards, 'lent me a candle the first night.' He was in residence one term before myself. When I came up I soon heard of him, not, however, as I have shewn just now, before I saw him. But accounts reached me of how, failing in his endeavour to gain permission to remove the bars from outside his window, he had covered them with gilding; how he had defied the foolish conventionalities of the University by lounging at the gate of the Quad., in a green dressing-gown, scarlet Fez cap, and slippers, and with a long clay pipe in his mouth; and this in the hours before two, when the rules of the University require the academic dress. This was on the second

morning of his residence. One of the Tutors (unknown to him) coming up, and accosting him with considerable amaze, was received with a stiff bow, and the remark, 'You have the advantage of me, sir. I do not remember to have been introduced to you.' 'Never mind that, Mr. Atheling,' the Tutor somewhat warmly rejoined. 'You will know me well enough some day. In the meantime, I would strongly advise you to confine that mountebank costume to your staircase before the Vice-President comes to his rooms.'

'You see,' remarked Atheling afterwards, to a friend, 'there was sound sense in the advice, though couched in unbecoming language. Atrocious costume, indeed! It was lovely! It was unique! But then the poor fellow hadn't the least eye for colour, and that's his misfortune, you know, not his fault.'

Well, experience mingled some slight elements of gravity with his merriment, as the flying Terms sped by, and the silver hair of the senior man began to streak the first gold and brown of the freshman's head. Still his ideas were remarkable always for their originality of conception, and boldness of execution.

Let me recur to one of them. He announced to me, one winter evening, the idea, matured as soon as entertained, that had entered his head; viz., of giving a grand amateur concert in his rooms—a concert to which ladies, and the Vice-Principal himself, with his wife and daughters, were to be invited. I laughed at the notion; however, he was in earnest about it, and manfully carried it through. I prophesied that the Vice would resent the being asked to such an affair. But assurance prevailed, where diffidence would have held back, and my friend informed me triumphantly that the 'Vice' and his family were coming; also that he had received a letter from the belle of Oxford, accepting his invitation.

Well, all was excitement and preparation for a long time beforehand. Glees, madrigals, solos, quartetts, overtures, were the order of the next three weeks. Great preparations were made in the rooms, and on the night the big college-gates

were thrown open, and the host, all a fever of excitement, was watching the carriages, one after one, rolling in. The concert itself went off, I suppose, much as other such concerts do; the performers (mostly novices at this kind of thing) trying vainly to look and sing at their ease. The men, those, at least, of the so-called 'fast' set, seeming to be altogether out of their element, and sadly terrified at the ladies. Indeed I was amused at the transformation that had come over the usual state of things there. Here were the rackets, rich fellows, considered, by themselves, as the *élite* of the community, awkward, shy, and bashful in the presence of ladies: noisy enough in their own set, they appeared tongue-tied and exceedingly ill at ease on this occasion. But the quiet men, some of them with the need for very careful living, yet *gentlemen*, came out into prominence, and enjoyed the genial change of ladies' society in Oxford—a rare occurrence there—while those were herding together in a helpless, dumb condition, sickly-looking, white-tied, black-coated, and miserable.

All, however, passed off well, and compliment after compliment was showered upon the (for a wonder) bashful host, and presently the last carriage rolled away. Then, as by a spell, the incubus was taken off my 'fast' men, and from speechless they became uproarious. I could not help being secretly tickled to see the evident relief that they felt at being left once more heroes of their own society.

Many of them, unlike our host, had no pretensions to the birth or breeding of gentlemen. Rich and vulgar, they commanded a certain standing in their own set; but they formed principally a set among themselves, and removed from that gathering they were fish out of water.

What University man does not know the set of which I am thinking? men whose wit is coarseness and vulgarity, whose repartees are rudeness, whose great forte is to sing an evil song, to 'chaff a cad' (who, by the way, often gets the better of the match), to spend money lavishly for admiration, often, how-

ever (as Aristotle notices of such spendthrifts), marring their profuseness by some interspersed of meanness and out-of-place frugality—men who neither really enjoy nor use Oxford life, who neither are educated by its studies nor by its society.

For oh, what an education there is, not only in the studies but in the society of a University, if rightly sought and employed! I have known men, reading men, shut themselves up in their rooms, refuse every, even the most innocent, invitations to any genial festivities, decline to subscribe to pleasures, however harmless and healthful—boating, cricket, with which they will have nothing to do; and all this with the best intention—with the intention of economy—with the intention of making the most of the Oxford life. As if the poor sovereign or two given towards such healthful and innocent amusements would not have been well spent in procuring the influence for good over lighter-hearted youths, who would have said, 'Well, if so and so won't join us he isn't at least one of the shabby lot, one of the fellows who think all that is pleasant is wrong. We can respect his self-denial, his economy, although we can't or needn't share in it.'

Then, though the study-element is certainly a considerable part of the Oxford education, it is by no means the only part; I had almost said, by no means the principal part. The genial life of free society, yet with its own proper and even strict etiquette; the mixing on equal terms with men of many circumstances and many minds; the interchange of free opinions, and the being among equals in age and standing; the responsible

relation then entered upon of host and guest—all these things do, undoubtedly, train a man to fill easily and gracefully his position in the society of after-life. His over-weeningness is rubbed down, his over-bashfulness rubbed off. He gets a certain self-possession without self-conceit, which hardly can be attained so well by any other way than by a university career well and honourably and wisely spent. He is educated, I repeat, as much by the society as by the study of the University. Thus much for the benefit of Oxford acquaintances even, we would not speak, in this utilitarian manner, of college friends.

For these are to be more warmly, more earnestly spoken of. What friends, not of our very kindred, are comparable to them? Dear old band, scattered now hither and thither, over the wide world; what a bond of union still joins every one of us; and how we should meet, with a gladness, a kindliness not elsewhere attainable, if at any time we might be gathered, as in those old days, in sweet society again! The string is cut, and the beads have run this way and that. Yet how naturally will all group together again, how readily run into one circle, if at any time they might be strung once more, all as they were (except for years of changes, but not changes to their love), upon the old dark-blue string!

Hence half the delight of the matches at Lord's and on the river, between the rival Universities. We meet them again, one by one; and the face brightens, and the eyes sparkle, and hand almost grows to hand, as we come suddenly, amid the crowd of strangers, upon some dear old College Friend.

A ROMANCE OF SOUTH KENSINGTON.

'CHARLIE,' said Frank Egerton, 'I think I should like to get married.'

'Don't be foolish,' said Mr. Davenport. 'Remember "Punch's" advice to people about to marry, *Don't.*'

'There's not much else to be done,' said Egerton. 'Ever since this big bit of money fell in, I don't feel the least bit of interest in the profession. I don't object to anything new and scientific, but surgery and physic considered in the

light of professional matters are simply an abomination.'

'But what on earth has put that notion into your head, Frank? You're much too good a fellow to be extinguished under a cloud of muslin, like most fools. What's ailing the lad?'

'I don't know,' said Frank, dreamily. 'I suppose it is as Locksley Hall says, "In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns the thoughts of love." Yesterday was the first day of spring, the sky was as blue as in June.'

'That fellow, Locksley Hall, is only an idiot,' said the matter-of-fact Mr. Davenport.

'You're only an idiot yourself, Davenport,' said Frank. 'Locksley Hall isn't a man but a poem.'

'Worse and worse,' said Davenport, 'if you're going to spoil yourself for all the purposes of good society and go mooning about after a petticoat.'

Davenport and Egerton had been fellow-students at Guy's, Davenport being by some years the senior man. Davenport was hard-headed, acute, industrious, did himself great credit, and was now laying the foundations of an extensive practice. I am afraid Egerton was rather an example of the Idle Apprentice. Languid, elegant, handsome, he had not much appreciation of hard work. He dabbled a little in medicine, but only as he dabbled in music, painting, and private theatricals. But he was a kindhearted man, highly intelligent, and of wide, generous culture, but like the gorgeous lilies, he did not care to toil or spin. And his lucky stars seemed to be very much of the same opinion, for a rather distant relative, in quite a promiscuous way, left him a fortune of twenty thousand pounds. He had now very handsome rooms in South Kensington, where he had as fine a collection of water-colour paintings and the more expensive kinds of photographs as could be desired, and some fine gems. Mr. Davenport was leaning back in one of the cosy arm-chairs, having dropped in for a cigar and a chat on his way home from seeing some patients.

'Any young woman in particular, Frank?' asked Davenport.

'Why, there's is, and there isn't,' said Frank. 'It's very odd, but I really, after a sort of way, fell in love with a girl at first sight. It was at the Opera that it came off: lots of this kind of thing come off at the Opera. It was at the set of representations which Mapleson gave last autumn. I had been to see my favourite opera "Il Flauto Magico," some of the finest music that Mozart ever composed. I stared about, like the rest of the people, between the acts, and on my right, in the box immediately above me, was one of the loveliest girls that I had ever seen. It so happened that I presently came quite close to her in the crush-room. Her party came to sit at a little table close to the sofa when I was doing *Maraschino* and soda. I assure you that to watch that girl move across the room was poetry in itself. Such deep eyes, such finely-cut lips you never saw, and as for hair the most beautiful.'

'We'll take the hair and eyes for granted,' said Mr. Davenport. 'Did you find out anything about her?'

'Not a bit,' he said; 'but by the luckiest chance in the world she dropped her handkerchief. It ought to have been a bit of the opera itself instead of a mere affair of the crush-room. She noticed the loss almost as soon as I did, but nothing can rob me of the consolation that I certainly handed it to her, and received one of the most gracious smiles that I ever beheld in my life. It did for me completely. I went down, bayoneted by a glance. When I saw them leave their box, I made my way into the lobby, where I presently saw them waiting for a carriage. Some name was called, and to my misery, I could not distinguish what the name was. But I ran out into the portico after it, nearly run over by the next carriage and almost taken up by the nearest policeman. It was hard work to keep the carriage in sight, until I could hail a hansom and tell the driver to follow that particular carriage. Did you ever

follow a girl in that way, Davenport?"

'Can't say I ever made such an ass of myself, hitherto, old fellow,' said Mr. Davenport; 'but we none of us know what we may come to.'

'Then let me tell you, it's a very queer thing to be following a person in that fashion. As Victor Hugo, who seems to know a deal about the subject, says, "You are altogether for a time surrendering to a stranger your liberty and your individuality." To my great satisfaction the hansom proceeded in the South Kensington direction. It would not have been pleasant to have been landed on the other side of Regent's Park. It passed my very door. Then suddenly we came upon a whole lot of carriages coming or going from a curious old countess's, who always gives parties in the dead season of the year. We must have lost the clue, for my hansom stopped when the brougham stopped, and I was brought face to face with a motley-faced old gentleman with a knobby nose, who evidently regarded me as a member of the swell mob.'

'And you have never seen her again?'

'Never; but I quite fell in love with the little party; at first sight; and if she felt inclined to marry me, that's very much the sort of thing that I should feel inclined to do with her. I am essentially an animal constructed for the purposes of domesticity, a Newfoundland dog man, and that sort of thing. Club life is an organized sort of selfishness; that is all. One is even tired of travel. One knows what there is to expect, and it's not so much after all. So, by an exhaustive process of reasoning, we fall back on the blessed and comfortable estate.'

'It all depends whether it really is blessed and comfortable, old fellow, because it's quite possible that it may turn out quite the other way. They say that marriage is a lottery, but, by Jove, most people make it up as John Leech's idiot made up his Derby book—can't possibly win and may lose ever so much.'

'What do you think of my little affair?'

'Very badly. It's romantic. Most romantic affairs turn out badly. I've a very low opinion of them.'

'I thought, old fellow, that you would have taken a more friendly and generous view of things.'

'I don't take an unfriendly view, Egerton. I don't even say with Mr. Tennyson's new style of "Northern Farmer," "Proputty—proputty—proputty." But I speak as a man who has watched life, and who has watched it under a scientific point of view.'

'What do you mean by that last observation?'

'Why, I mean that there are a lot of points which a scientific, or even a sensible man will consider before he commits himself, and which a man in love never thinks of doing. In the first place there is the *physique*. Look well at her teeth—a most important matter; good teeth are becoming quite scarce in the market. You rave about eyes and hair; teeth are just as important. Then is the girl really educated? Beneath a smattering of accomplishments it is very hard to find out whether there is any real training or real knowledge. Then as for disposition, you may have as soft a spoken lass as you like, and in a few months she may prove a thorough vixen, and develop a capacity for abusive language for which the vernacular English is only a feeble instrument. Even if she don't use bad language, she may still use her words as I use my lancets. Then, perhaps, she has got some radical inherent vice—drinks, lies, pads, paints. There is nothing you can't believe of the "girl of the period." Then she may inherit a bad constitution from some rascally ancestor; and if you have a flaw in your own what's to become of the children?—Scrofula, consumption, madness.'

'You infernal old beast to talk that way!'

'That's just it. You have no pure spirit of science about you, a mere empiric. In these days of deterioration we should all go to the bad if it were not for the happy tendency of nature always to revert to the original pure type. But I've finished

my bit of smoke, and must stroll. I have half a mind to go into the South Kensington Museum; it is not often that I find myself so close to it.'

'Seems to me rather a slow sort of thing to do.'

'Yes; but nothing pays so well at a small evening party. South Kensington generally crops up at a small tea-fight.'

So the men got up—it was just close by—and then went into the South Kensington Museum, which seemed, at least that evening, to be in a languid sort of way, and not to be doing much public business. The British working man, after a hard day's work, prefers his pipe and a pot of beer to most æsthetic enjoyments that can be offered to him. Still there were a few strolling about, with an expression of intense stolidity, apparently without the slightest idea of the nature or significance of the objects before them. The place was, in fact, almost deserted; the feeding-places shut up, the galleries still. The two men strolled about. Egerton liked doing nothing, and he did it to perfection. Davenport's quick eye took in many things which, by their nature and their scientific relations, doubtless gave him a keen intellectual pleasure. Some cases of coins and gems had recently been deposited here by one of those enlightened public benefactors who from time to time yield up the contents of their galleries and cabinets for the benefit of the British public. Just then a young lady, attended by her maid, passed on to the cabinet of gems; and now it was possible to see the difference between an intelligent and an unintelligent examination of pretty things. This young lady, who had gems of her own about her, evidently knew a good deal about gems. With an eager curiosity she examined specimens; in a dainty little memorandum, in true artist fashion, she made a slight sketch or two.

As she was thus occupied, the two young men commenced a conversation which could hardly fail to be audible to a bystander; and Davenport noticed a curious intellectual phenomenon in his friend.

Though talking to him, he was evidently talking *at* the young lady. Her face could not be seen; but the lithe, graceful outlines of the form could be seen, full of curves and softness, instinct and informed with spirit, to which sound teeth must have infallibly belonged, and a sound constitution, such as would have satisfied Mr. Davenport's physiological opinions. Egerton began talking, with an evident intention to arrest and interest the attention of the young lady. Davenport had never before noticed such a circumstance in his friend; but he had noticed it in various instances, and in Egerton's case it almost seemed to him that it was a sort of yearning for sympathy, a desire to be brought into some sort of converse with this clever, graceful girl, though the converse should be all on one side.

'A queer thing happened to a friend of mine,' said Egerton, 'who went to a great gallery to inspect a precious gem. The gem was exceedingly valuable, and was kept under a glass case, and only shown by special permission, under the care of an official. The man went to see it, and examined it with the greatest care and admiration. After some little space the officer said that if he had finished his examination they would now go. The man said, "Certainly. He had finished a minute or two ago, and was now ready to leave." "Then where was the ring?" "Oh, he laid it down on its case." But no ring was there. A search was made, but in vain; the ring had vanished. Then the officer said that he must search the visitor. The visitor objected. The officer said his duty was imperative. The visitor swore that he would rather be slain on the spot than submit to such an insult. As the officer persisted, the visitor threw himself into a fighting attitude, and the officer called for assistance. Several men came up; but in the middle of the hubbub some sharper-witted public servant discovered that the gem had fallen down between the velvet and the frame of the case. Mutual congratulations and excuses followed. Then the visitor stepped forward

and said, "I will now tell you the reason why I would not submit to be searched. I have a gem about me which is the perfect facsimile of this one. I had not thought that there was one in the world like it, and I came on purpose to see. Now, if you had found this gem upon me, your own unfound, you would have taken it to be the gem that was lost, and I should have been condemned. I could not submit to that while I was alive."

'What an extraordinary story, Egerton,' said Davenport. 'Where did you pick it up? and who was the man?'

'It happened to myself, last summer, at Munich,' replied Egerton, quietly. 'The gem was an antique, which had been recovered at Pompeii, at least as old as the Christian era. Here it is in this ring.'

Just at this moment the young lady, whose head aslant had showed that she was listening to the story which Egerton had designed her to hear, turned round, and Egerton was hardly surprised—'his heart had been a prophet to his heart'—that it was the lovely girl of the Opera.

'By Jove! Davenport, the girl I saw on "Il Flauto Magico" night.'

'Have you lured her with a Zaubrerflotte of your own?' said Davenport, a little savagely.

The young lady gave a half-conscious look of recognition and surprise, which the doctor's keen eye did not fail to recognize; and then, with provoking *nonchalance*, passed away to a distant case, where the friends could hardly venture to follow her.

They went into the entrance, however, and sat down in the porch instead of going out into the Brompton Road. The big trees in front gloomed heavily in the starlight. A solitary carriage was standing in waiting. Egerton was excited and feverish. He wrapt his cloak round him, and continued moodily silent. He already felt quite certain that this was the carriage which he had followed from Covent Garden. Presently the carriage-door was flung open, and the same young lady tripped to the

steps. And the carriage went off at a sharp trot.

'Will you try your luck again?' whispered Davenport; 'shall I hail a hansom?'

Egerton wildly gesticulated. But his friend's strong grasp was upon his arm, and it was obviously impossible that he should be able to gain the carriage so as to identify it.

'There goes my chance again,' he growled, 'for the second time, and I have lost it.'

'The third time's lucky,' said Davenport, phlegmatically.

The third time really came. That things which are to be will be, is the approved and fundamental axiom of fatalism. There is a good deal of romance left in this used-up old world, if you are romantic enough to understand. At least so it came to pass at South Kensington.

Egerton was 'seedy.' He had no confidence in his own medical skill. If he ever had any, which is very doubtful, it had vanished as soon as the aunt's big pot of money had fallen in. So he asked Davenport, the friend, who with all his hardness was 'as his own soul' to him, to prescribe. Davenport came, and discharged the duty, which is frequently the first and most necessary part of a doctor's duty—he bullied and aroused the patient, shook him out of his languor and indifference, confiscated his regalias, and turned him out into the fresh air. Davenport, though a rising man, was not so busy that he could not afford half an hour to an old friend whose health, moral and physical, wanted toning and bracing. So they paid their shillings and went into the Horticultural Gardens.

It was not a public day, you understand. Nothing in the way of grand music or stately promenade. They might suddenly have passed into the loneliness of a tropical forest instead of being hemmed in on every side with a wilderness of brick and mortar. From that very pretty entrance passage with its summer bloom they passed on to the smooth turf with the enamelled flower-beds. The space is after all

not much, and is soon exhausted; but it so happened that, except a few children with nurses or governesses, there was no one there. Then they walked in the noble conservatory, and ascending the broad flight of steps, examined, so far as they could, the progress of the Albert Memorial building. As they paused on the highest terrace to catch the purer softer breeze, and leaned on the balcony to watch the lovely scene below, with a sigh of regret that they and other Londoners should have the unwisdom of so seldom coming here except in the crowd which takes away half the beauty of the scene, Egerton looked around, with a certain lassitude and indifference which was not altogether pleasing to the skilled eye of his friend, always on a scientific look out for the possibilities of evil.

Presently, Davenport said, with a curious expression, 'Unless I am greatly mistaken, Egerton, here comes a friend of yours.'

The languor and indifference were all gone. With the utmost excitement he exclaimed, 'You don't mean *her*!'

'I don't know whom you mean by *her*. As she must have some name or other I shall call her Lady Adelgiza South Kensington, until I know her real name. I mean, however, the lady we saw at the Museum and whom you say you saw at the Opera.'

'You can't see her face.'

'No, but I recognize her gait. Very few young ladies can mount steps so gracefully as she is doing.'

Egerton was visibly agitated.

'Do you really care for this girl, Frank?'

'Don't ask me. I am quite in love with her.'

Now this was truly astonishing to Davenport. It was something altogether foreign to his scientific habits of mind. No amount of medical lore would give him an explanation. 'It's an ultimate fact,' he murmured to himself, 'and we must puzzle away at it.'

'Something must be done, and be done quickly,' said Egerton, 'or else the tide in the affairs of men will have ebbed altogether. Help

me, Davenport,' he added, almost piteously.

'I will, old fellow,' said the medical. 'Have you got that ring with the antique gem?'

'Here it is.'

'Do you mind the risk of losing it for the chance of finding out all about the girl?'

'I would risk it a hundred times over.'

'Then leave it on the balustrade and come this way.'

The ring was placed on the balustrade, and Egerton hastily followed his friend down into the grounds.

'Now stop a bit, Egerton,' said Mr. Davenport. 'I don't think we can be observed here; but I will see what I can make out with the help of my field glass.'

Oh, those field-glasses and telescopes! They have well-nigh abolished obscurity from the British Isles. All the coast line is swept by the coastguard's telescope. All hills are watched by gamekeepers' glasses. Lonely lovers, wandering in unfrequented solitudes, you little imagine what powerful optical instruments may be brought to bear upon you!

'Yes,' murmured Davenport, 'she is on the terrace—she is walking along; now I call that a really gracious walk—the sunlight on the gem will probably strike that acute eye of hers—she is moving towards the balustrade—she is going to take up the ring; yes, no, yes, no, yes—now she is examining it. Putting it on her finger, I declare—that is coming it rather strong. All over with your ring, old fellow. Your pretty girl has turned petty larcener, has put it into her pocket and walked off. She ought to be searched, as they wanted to search you at Munich.'

'I suppose we had better wait till they come down and then ask whether they have found a ring.'

'Not a bad card, but still there is a better card to play. It is a case of winning or losing. I must disappoint you, old fellow. We had better not meet them, but dodge about until they are gone.'

As soon as they were gone they made inquiries at the lodges, and

found that no lost article had been left there that morning.

'Now, old fellow, I have only one word to say to you,' said Mr. Davenport; 'for the next few days or weeks keep a sharp look-out on the second column of the "Times."'

In five days' time his eye alighted on an advertisement in the second column: 'Found in the Horticultural Gardens, an antique ring with gem. The owner can recover it, on identifying it, at 100, Cromwell Buildings.' The reader learned in localities will perceive that I have given a non-existent number.

He found out that Lady Harbinger lived here. He called one morning at two and sent up his card. As he entered the drawing-room, a lovely girl, music in hand, was about to escape through the door.

Her sapphire eyes met his, and she coloured up deliciously. 'Ah,' she said, 'you have come about your ring. I could not help hearing you talk about it at the Museum;—it was a wonder if she could have helped;—what an extraordinary thing that I should have been the person who discovered your loss!'

'Not so extraordinary, perhaps, if you only knew all,' thought Mr. Egerton. 'A most extraordinary coincidence; and there is another one still more extraordinary, if you recollect; I had the honour of picking up your handkerchief in the crush-room of the Opera.'

'I fancied something of the sort, but I was not sure,' said Lucy Harbinger.

'You are fond of gems, I suppose?' said Egerton.

'Yes; and I have reason to be. My uncle left me a little cabinet, beautifully laid out and catalogued; so I really take quite a professional interest in them.'

Just then Lady Harbinger entered—the widow of a country baronet—an open-hearted, kind dowager. She duly put Mr. Egerton through the necessary catechizing, and restored him his Pompeii ring.

Then there was some conversation, and it was presently discovered that Lady Harbinger's mother had known Mr. Egerton's aunt intimately. But so it commonly is in life. The surface of society is much smaller than is generally supposed. Put any two people together, and they are sure enough to discover common acquaintance.

'And now, Mr. Egerton, you shall see my cabinet; and I have quite a collection of books on the subject—Mr. King's and all the rest.'

It was a pretty collection, and its money value was considerable; but I suppose Lucy did not look upon it in this point of view.

'You must have taken a great deal of trouble, and spent money on that advertisement, Lady Harbinger,' said Mr. Egerton. 'Will you kindly let me know what I am indebted to you, besides your boundless kindness?'

'Oh, you must not talk about that,' said Lucy. 'The pleasure of becoming acquainted with such a ring was quite worth the trouble.'

'Then, Miss Harbinger, you must positively do me the honour of putting this ring in your cabinet. In my hands it is quite lost; but it will have an added value in any collection.'

And he more than ever resolved in his own mind that he would also offer another ring of a much plainer description.

With some difficulty, and after some visits, Lucy was brought to accept that particular ring. I think it not impossible but she will accept the other ring also. Mr. Davenport must take a favourable view of all the conditions, as he proffers to be best man. But this is only a fragmentary story. I have nothing to do with the usual humdrum of courtship, settlements, and the ceremony, but only with a set of certain odd circumstances which made up a sort of romance in South Kensington.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

CONTEMPORARY BIOGRAPHY.

SEVERAL works have recently appeared of 'contemporary biography,' by which we mean biography or autobiography of men who have occupied some space in the public eye, and who have only recently been removed from us, or perhaps are still among us. Such works of biography, however much they may lack force, shape, or literary merit, nevertheless form a portion of the materials from which the secular and ecclesiastical history of our wonderful era must be built up. Yet we must say with regret that the literary workmanship of some of those recent biographies is deplorably bad, so much so that we feel inclined to fling aside the works in disgust as unworthy of perusal. It would, however, be a mistake to do this. Even in the most unpromising books we may find stray paragraphs very well worthy of being rescued from oblivion, and giving interesting glances into English and foreign interiors.

We cannot, however, give even this limited recommendation to some of the biographies that we see. Here, for instance, is a thick book giving the biography of the late Henry Hoare.* We have carefully looked it through with the intention, as our manner is, to take some of the cream off the book. But you cannot get cream from skim-milk and water. We have found it quite impossible to cull a single paragraph or even a single sentence from the life of Mr. Hoare that is worth quotation. This is a great pity, for Henry Hoare had a strongly-marked idiosyncrasy of his own; and any man of descriptive talent who knew him well and could appreciate his character, could have given us a portraiture of one who had much

picturesqueness as well as solid worth. Mr. Hoare was a man of considerable mental power and of great activity; a most earnest and devout churchman, who loved the Established Church with passionate attachment, and spent himself and his substance on her behalf. It so happened that the present writer spent a day in Mr. Hoare's company just before the lamentable and extraordinary accident which caused his death. He was looking out of the window of a railway carriage, and his head came in contact with a telegraph-post, causing fracture of the skull. The occasion referred to was a public festivity, and Mr. Hoare and the writer were the only fellow-guests at a friend's house. There was something extremely simple, kindly, and old-fashioned about him. A great deal had been done to spoil him by making him the oracle of a set, but he was unspoiled for all that. He made a great many speeches that day, one of which was very much to the purpose, for he gave the good cause a hundred pounds, and would give more if more were wanted. But Mr. Hoare always had a most absolute delight in giving. After a substantial lunch he asked for his room and solemnly retired thither. He came back for the early cup of tea, and told us he had taken a siesta, as was his invariable habit. We only mention this as Mr. Sweet tells us that it was his habit to rise in the middle of the night and spend one or more hours in writing. We can understand this superhuman habit with the help of the siesta; but without it Mr. Hoare would be burning the candle at both ends, and he did not at all seem the sort of man to do that sort of thing. I remember one curious bit of conversation. He had always been a model churchwarden, and at one of the church congresses he had said

* 'A Memoir of Henry Hoare, Esq., M.A. With a Narrative of the Church Movements,' &c. By James Bradley Sweet, M.A. Rivingtons.

that if people did not pay church rates they ought to be 'quodded,' and he would 'quod' them. I ventured to tell him that this was rather hard language, and that people thought it harsh. In reply he utterly disclaimed any intention of meaning prison by 'quod,' which at least showed a laudable ignorance of the force of slang expressions. It is well known that he had promised to give a thousand a year towards that magnificent tower of that now magnificent chapel of St. John's College, Cambridge, the foundation stone of which he laid. He expressly stipulated that this annual payment was only to be while he was living, and by his death this resource failed the college after two years' payments. Peace to his honoured memory! He was good, worthy, useful; but the idea of manufacturing a big book about him appears to us to be exceedingly incongruous.

In some respects better, but in other respects immeasurably worse, is Mr. James Grant's life of Sir George Sinclair.* This is a provoking book. Sir George Sinclair was undoubtedly a remarkable man, and the book contains much that is very readable and interesting, but it is frightfully marred by ignorance, stupidity, and fulsomeness. More craven adulation of titled people we have nowhere seen. Mr. Grant quotes a duke rather than a baron, and a baron rather than a baronet, and twaddle by a titled person rather than common sense by a commoner. There was a clergyman of high social mark whom many of our readers may recollect, Mr. Hamilton Gray, of Bolsover Castle, with whom Sir George Sinclair corresponded in closest friendship and intimacy for very many years. We know enough of the late Mr. Hamilton Gray to be able to say that this correspondence must have been eminently interesting and instructive; but we are not favoured with a single line, while the merest, most trivial notes of men of title are admitted. It would be easy to

point out some ludicrous errors which he has made; but it is really not worth while to waste powder and shot on such a poor writer as Mr. James Grant, amiable and well-meaning as he may be, always barring his idolatry of Debreit.

Yet this stupid book contains some extremely interesting and important matter, which may be lost for readers who throw it aside in disgust. Sir George Sinclair himself, though he runs a danger of being made ridiculous by undiscerning, extravagant panegyric, had all the elements of a good man and some of the elements of a great man. There are a few letters and anecdotes in the work which amply repay the trouble of perusal. Lord Byron spoke of Sinclair as being the prodigy of Harrow. There is here an interesting anecdote of Byron, how he once said to Sir Robert Abercrombie, 'How is your mother?' I very well remember the beating she made my mother give me; but tell her from me it would have been well for me if they had been many more.' In his early travels the famous incident befel him of being captured a few days before the battle of Jena was fought, and being brought into the presence of Napoleon. The Emperor treated him, as soon as he had laid aside his suspicions, with great good-nature, asking him what classical authors he was reading. Sinclair actually pointed out on the map the memorable spot of Jena to Napoleon. This remarkable occurrence naturally formed one of Sir George's stock stories, and he had to tell it so often that at last he refused to tell it any more. Sir George represented his county, and made an effective public speaker, as patriotic as Joseph Hume himself, with whom he lived on terms of fullest intimacy. There is in this volume an interesting account of the strange malady which befel Lord Glenelg. Though a cabinet minister, and a great favourite in society, he suddenly secluded himself from the public for ten years, passing most of his time in his chair gazing upon the opposite wall. At the end of that time he once more resumed his old position, full of life

* 'Memoirs of Sir George Sinclair, Bart., of Ulbster.' By James Grant. Tinsley.

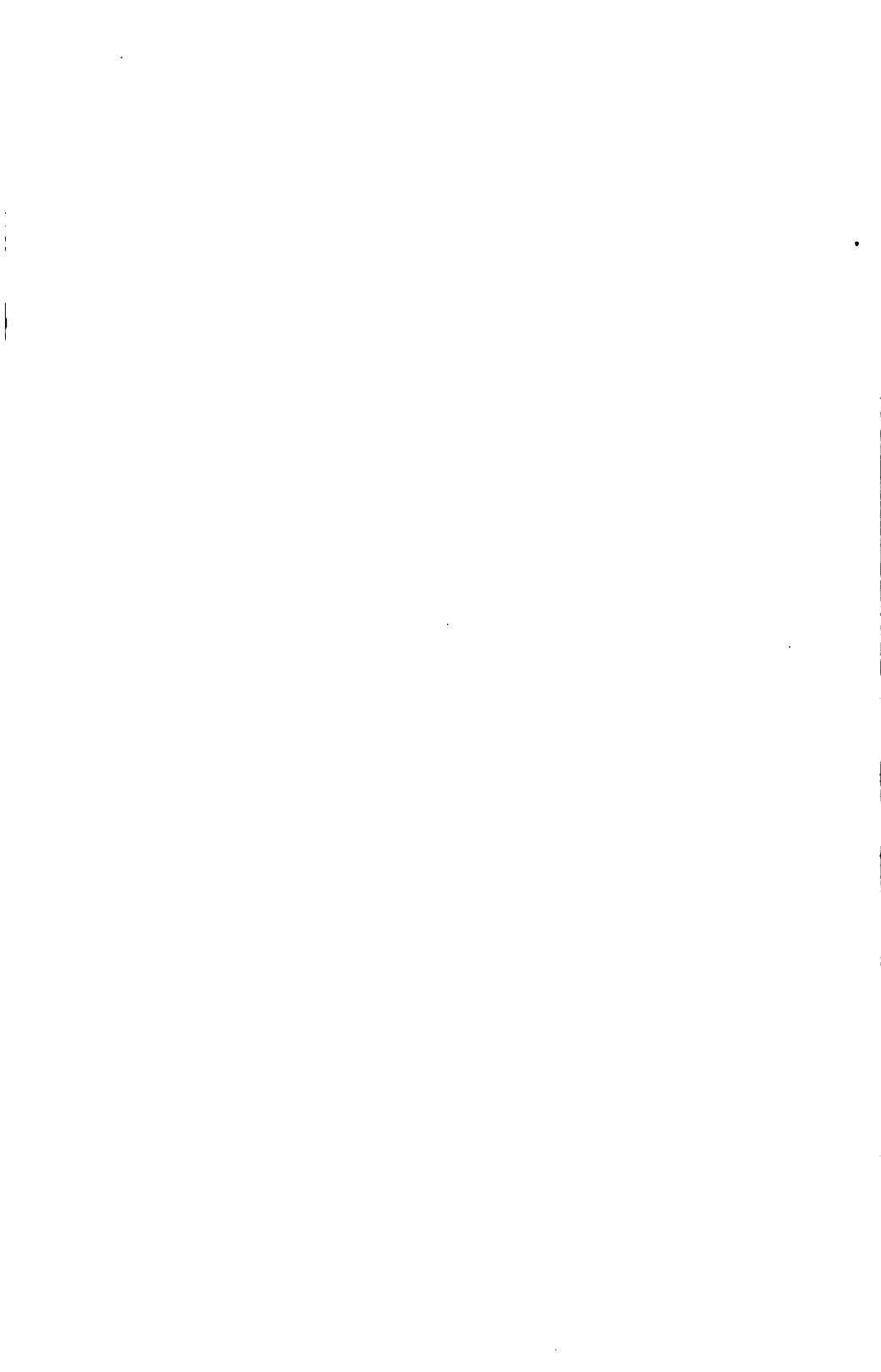




Drawn by J. Maloney.

GOING TO THE DRAWING-ROOM.

— the Year.





GOING TO THE DRAWING-ROOM.

(ST. JAMES'S STREET DURING A 'BLOCK.')

WHITE plumes upon her braided hair, rich jewels on her brow,
 Ah! thinks she of the dear old days, the green lanes ever now?—
 The green lanes, where, in leafy June, beneath a cloudless sky
 We hearts exchanged—'true unto death,' or *said so*—she and I!

True unto death! So little know we, what hath Fate in store.
 I live alone, and if she grieve, her grief is gilded o'er:
 Gold! universal medicine, in this gold-making age,
 Great king! there ne'er was pang so great, thy touch could not assuage!

O Fashion's queen! the diamonds upon thy snowy neck
 May glitter on an aching heart, and gall the bride thy deck:
 Keep silence! What gay butterfly mid all this turmoil, knows
 That yesternight thou dropped'st a tear upon a withered rose?

Yet, there is one, who from the crowd, unseen, with eyesight dim,
 With gathering tears looks on at thee, though thou think'st not on him!
 Run on, O carriage, with thy freight! What matters hearts betrayed?
 Thus shift the scenes on Life's wide stage, thus is the pageant played!

A. H. B.

RIDDLES OF LOVE.

CHAPTER XVII.

MR. MANDEVILLE AND MORE FRIENDS.

LONDON, however empty, is always fuller than the country, as was remarked by a certain disreputable duke who was remarkably attached to the metropolis. But the difference in the streets when the season has past is depressing to the well-regulated mind; and the Park is peculiarly dismal when people decline to drive and ride therein. The few who frequent it feel forsaken; and, indeed, those whom affairs keep in town avoid the Park as much as habit will permit. There are people up from the country, however, who enjoy London in the 'silly season'—which, by-the-way, is at its silliest period when it has just set in—and they have at least the proud privilege of being monarchs of most that they survey, and finding that their rights there are very few to dispute. Not that these things matter much to many men who, through one cause or another, are kept in town during the Long Vacation. Sir Nicholas Tindal it was, I think, who

said, when his legal friends once sympathised with him upon his lot as vacation judge, 'It doesn't matter at all to me—a man must be somewhere.' It did not matter to that eminent Chief Justice, who found little pleasure out of his profession; and there are men of all classes who agree with Sir Nicholas Tindal. But the absence of women is the peculiarly striking feature of the autumn months, and that is a drawback difficult to supply. So the aspect of the Park at this period is certainly sad, and men kept in town at the time will do well to frequent the City, on which the sun never sets as far as life and activity is concerned.

I am making these remarks with strict irrelevancy to the matter in hand; for neither the Mantons nor Cecil Halidame would have cared a straw whether the Park were full or empty, even had they to traverse it on their way to Richmond, engrossed as they were in the charm-

ing occupation of talking about themselves.

Had they been more observant they might have noticed another carriage, which passed them as they stood waiting at the Corner and kept along the Knightsbridge Road. The vehicle, an open barouche, was one which might well have arrested their attention, for it was very showy and shiny, was drawn by a pair of horses which were at once showy and shiny also, and contained a gentleman who was perhaps more shiny and showy than either.

The gentleman was inclined to be stout as to figure and five-and-forty as to age; had a happy Saxon face, the picture of prosperous good-humour, and bare with the exception of a straw-coloured moustache, wonderfully waxed. He wore a hat so new that you expected to see the hatter's box on the seat beside him: a gorgeous satin cravat like a folded slab, adorned with an enormous diamond; a velvet waistcoat, on which reposed a massive watch chain, connected somehow with three different pockets, suggesting unusual resources on the part of the wearer for learning the 'time of day,' and borne down with pendant treasures like the fruit-trees which grew jewels in the Arabian tale; a coat with rather more velvet on the collar and cuffs than it could conveniently accommodate; pantaloons similarly embarrassed as regarded the stripes down the seams; and boots and gloves which may be best described, in professional phrase, as 'defying competition.'

If horses, carriage, and costume can confer happiness, the gentleman in question must have been happy indeed. There was certainly a *prima facie* case in his favour. Let me look into the facts.

He was the proprietor and manager of the new Imperial Theatre—a grand speculation which had just taken the town by storm and promised to hold that capital in defiance of all comers. This happy edifice had stage resources such as were never known before. Every piece produced was a model of mounting, besides being a marvel of

dramatic art; and had the plays been bad, they were acted so well that you would never have found out their faults. Of the front of the house nothing more laudatory could be urged than the assurance that it was worthy of the back. Mirrors, gilding, and pictures, asserting separate charms, contributed to a harmonious whole; and the Sybarite who sought relief from these attractions found it in soft drapery of satin and lace. Every seat was a sofa and every occupant of every seat was a somebody, more or less. The private boxes were let only to the peerage, and nobody under the rank of a baronet was admitted to the stalls. The pit people were expected to give hostages to society in the form of white cravats, and pledges as to the use of the letter H. Even the 'gods' were made to conduct themselves like respectable mortals, and apples and oranges and ginger beer were prohibited by protective duties imposed upon the police. Such at least was the design of the undertaking, and if it was not strictly carried out the blame was scarcely due to the management, but rather to a perverse public, which has a bad habit of doing as it likes.

The magnificent equipage holding the equally magnificent manager—subject to the common law which governs common conveyances—after passing Knightsbridge found itself at Brompton; and there, at a certain house in Brompton Row, it came to a stop with an effect which made an imposing appearance to passers by, and was not without an influence upon neighbouring windows. Nothing indeed in the coachman's driving became him more than his mode of drawing up; and the horses, entering into the artistic spirit of their guide, met the broad distinction between a state of progression and a state of repose, by a gratifying compromise suggestive of blood and oats.

If any subsequent proceeding could equal the triumphant manner of the arrival, perhaps it was the mode in which the door knocker was dealt with—as concurrently as human agility would permit—by a

footman whose haughty stature and evident strength announced no ordinary fitness for his functions. A small boy on the pavement asked him if he wanted to knock the door down—but the remark was ribald, and was very properly received by the addressee in a different spirit from that which would have been accorded to a *bonâ fide* desire for information. With something of the insolence of office, and something more of the pride of place, he told the precocious disrespector of persons to get away with him, and in an arbitrary mood into which the habit of official dignity sometimes betrays the wisest men, muttered an ineffectual threat concerning a policeman.

A hard knock, however, can have no more practical effect than that which may be produced by a soft one—it can only get the door opened after all. And I am not sure that in the present case it expedited the process; for it seemed to induce agitation within the building, indicated by apparent running up and down stairs, and subdued voices heard in tones of warning, significant rather of hurry than alacrity. When the portal at last turned upon its hinges, it was found to be in the hands of the bounding Leonora—the house being that of her mistress the eminent Mrs. Grandison.

Leonora, who was always equal to the occasion, whatever it was, received the tall footman with a condescending dignity such as might belong to a Maid of Honour to an Exiled Queen, who has opened the door with an impression of the postman, while the servant has gone out for beer.

The tall footman brought his master's compliments to Mrs. Grandison, with an intimation that he awaited that lady and her friends. Leonora assumed custody of the compliments with becoming courtesy, and answered on her own account that Mrs. Grandison and her friends were quite ready, and would be down directly.

As she spoke Mrs. Grandison emerged from her boudoir on the ground-floor, and almost at the

same moment you might have seen descending the stairs persons of no less importance than Captain Pemberton and May.

Mr. Mandeville—I might as well have told you the manager's name before—was by this time on the pavement. In the spirit of an eastern prince who advances to meet distinguished visitors only to the extent of the carpet, he had not entered the house; but now that the ladies were on what he might consider his own ground, he met them with much consideration, and assisted them into the carriage with every mark of care as regarded their robes and the contingencies of wheels. And the ladies being placed on the seats of honour, and himself and Captain Pemberton with their backs to the horses, he looked as happy as if the presence of the said ladies were his main object in life, and his carriage, horses, and costume—not to mention the little matter of the Imperial Theatre—were quite secondary considerations.

The tall footman, with proper obeisance, asked the usual confidential question.

'To the Star and Garter,' answered Mr. Mandeville—his servants needed no further direction.

The horses bounded off like a couple of Leonoras; and elated with the breath of public applause, the party careered proudly on the road to Richmond.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TWO PARTIES AT THE STAR AND GARTER.

When Cecil Halidame and the Mantons arrived at the Star and Garter, they made acquaintance for the first time with the grand equipage which had preceded them, and whose occupants had just entered the house. The turn-out not only invited attention, but commanded it, and the new arrivals evinced some pardonable curiosity concerning its ownership. Halidame was not at all surprised on obtaining the desired information; for he knew Mr. Mandeville very well by the repute which he enjoyed for riches

and a certain kind of fashion. It is not every rich man who is of the great world; but there is a solidarity about wealth which brings its possessors together, and they accumulate social position as they very frequently accumulate their money, by a joint-stock arrangement with a reserve of limited liability. They have at least a world of their own, and seldom fail to secure for it a tolerably wide orbit in the social system. The great manager, I believe, was nobody in particular to begin with; but by force of the magnificent manner in which he employed his wealth, more perhaps than by the wealth itself, he had been particularly successful in obtaining what I have indicated as fashion of a certain kind. If he did not go much into the great world, he at least managed to get a great many of the great world's occupants to come into his little world, which is much the same thing, especially when you decide that the difference doesn't matter.

Mr. Mandeville, it appeared, had a large dinner in one room; and as Mr. Manton's was a small dinner in another room, there was no need that the two societies should meet. This was fortunate, as the repasts of some persons might otherwise have been spoiled. Unpleasant matters lose half their unpleasantness when men have dined. It is a benevolent law of nature which leads an unhappy murderer always to eat a hearty breakfast before he is hanged; and the humane character of our legislation, which is mainly conducted after dinner, will one of these days spare him the hanging altogether. Perhaps our commercial morality would not be so heartless as it is, if transactions in the City took place in the evening.

But here I am in the position of Sir Boyle Roche's bird—so dear to the light literature of the day—supposed to be in two places at once. I must clearly divide myself, and relate what occurred at the two entertainments in separate form.

Mr. Mandeville's dinner was served first, as it had been ordered beforehand, so I will give him the

At Mandeville's.

Mrs. Grandison and Miss Pemberton, after disposing of their bonnets and mantles, rejoined their host and the captain just before the arrival of the last additional guest. The additional guests were all men.

'I am so much obliged to you, Mr. Mandeville,' said Mrs. Grandison, observing the latter fact, and taking the manager aside, 'that you have not asked any other ladies beside ourselves. Some of our friends would have frightened poor May, who is timid enough already.'

'I took care of that,' replied Mr. Mandeville, 'after the hint you gave me. Besides, Captain Pemberton, as you know, is not half reconciled to his daughter's appearance in public, and I really think he would have withdrawn his consent, had not Sir Norman Halidame been enabled to make him independent of her earnings by giving him that place in the Company. I managed that part of the business, as I dare say you guess—in a quiet way.'

'I did indeed, Mr. Mandeville,' returned the actress, 'and my mental remark was—that is a noble act, dictated by a noble mind. It would have been a sin against dramatic art if the wonderful talent which Miss Pemberton has displayed, and the extraordinary aptitude which she has shown for the stage with so very little tuition, had been withheld from the public. And of her success on Saturday I have not the least doubt.'

'Nor I, indeed, Mrs. Grandison,' said the manager; 'but I thought it just as well that a few of the fellows should make her acquaintance beforehand: though even in this policy I have been discreet. You see I have not any of the actual critics here, but rather people who influence them, and do good in indirect ways—if only by talking in favour of a new star. And that reminds me—I must present a few of them, at any rate. In speaking of her, by-the-by, don't forget to call her by the name I have given her—Miss Mirabel. Her father, I think, is not wrong in wishing her own

name withheld. He keeps *his*, remember, and is called her uncle.'

So the great man hurried off to bring up a few of his friends, of whom all were regarding May with as much curiosity and admiration as could be decently disguised.

And May, indeed, looked worthy of any homage. Her love for the art she had chosen had, in its gratification and development, imparted to her a new beauty. Her proudly-cut features, and well-formed face and head, would under any conditions have been pronounced perfect; while her form—rounded and lithe like a leopard, and sufficiently tall to be decidedly not short—would have an equal claim to be considered faultless. Her chestnut hair, massed in such wonderful waves, was an ornament, too, of potent effect. But the new charm was in her eyes—I have called them deep grey, but perhaps they were more like violet,—which shone with a fire never known in the old dull days—with the light of a grand consciousness of passion and of power.

Now, however, her glances were timid and repressed; for the ordeal imposed upon her was sufficiently embarrassing—that of making the acquaintance of stranger after stranger with whom she was the object of exclusive attention. Fortunately for her, dinner was served after a few presentations, and she took refuge at the table, where she could not at any rate be expected to talk to half a dozen people at once.

May was on the right of Mr. Mandeville, who occupied the centre of the table and had Mrs. Grandison on his left. May's next neighbour was Lord Arthur Penge, a son of the Earl of Surbiton—a literary young nobleman and a theatrical young nobleman also, who knew everybody and most things, and appeared to have a profound and extensive acquaintance with himself—a personage of whom he evidently had the highest opinion. His appearance was so like that of so many young men you meet about, as to include nothing worthy of note; but he was an amusing fellow, as May found, for a neighbour, and there was at least no harm about

him. A more noticeable man was Mr. Mangles, the distinguished dramatic author, who sat a little way off; but his features were rather ungainly, and he owed his effect to his deep, penetrating eyes. A pleasanter person, with well-cut features and a good head, who looked like a convivial poet grown rather stout, occupied the next chair. This was Mr. Jock Mackenzie, of 'blood and culture' celebrity. He had a potent name and influence; but I am not sure that blood had done anything or culture everything towards his success, which was, after all, due to sheer intellect and originality of mind. Rupert Mannering, the pale, haughty man who sat opposite, had both blood and culture beyond denial; but nobody cared about him as they cared for Jock Mackenzie—and he was so feeble in literature that he had to publish his books at his own expense, and got them ridiculed at his own expense also. I cannot go all round the table just now, but may mention that among the other guests was Captain and Lieutenant-Colonel Jerecho, of the —th Life Guards, who had never missed a first night at a London theatre for fifteen years, except while he was in the Crimea; Lieut. and Captain Tracks, of the same distinguished regiment, who always followed in the footsteps of his brother officer, and had gained eminence in the same particular for the last two years and a half; and Mr. Highjinks, the burlesque writer, who contradicted the popular paradox concerning funny men—founded upon cynical accounts given by serious men—by conveying in his manner and conversation precisely the idea of what he was.

It is rather too bad that I should have forgotten. There was also present, besides the *et cetera* class of men about town and *littérateurs*, our friend Mr. Hanger; but that gentleman might be taken for granted by those who knew Mr. Mandeville's mode of making up parties of the kind, for he was a *confidant* of the manager's as well as of other men, and issued invitations in his name, collecting guests when

necessary upon short notice by verbal appeals. He had intended, owing to a little pique on the score of fancied neglect, to absent himself upon this occasion; but when Halidame's invitation failed him, he could not resist the temptation of passing a pleasant evening—so there he was. The party, by-the-way, was made all the pleasanter by the addition; for Hanger was one of the most friendly fellows you ever met, and as fond of rendering social services, in the promotion of harmony and good feeling, as of helping his allies in matters of business.

With all these elements at work, you may be sure the dinner went off well. There was not much talking—there never is at any table—until the lions had tasted blood in the shape of champagne. The first cork gives the impetus, and after that the inspiration begins. The conversation confused May a great deal. She did not understand half the allusions either to men, women, or things; and most of the talk was of what may be called a technical character. She had an idea that, considering the company she had been asked to meet, she would hear discussions upon literature and art, which would err on the side of being too æsthetic and profound. But she learned, on inquiry of Lord Arthur, that such kind of conversation was considered out of place.

'The men, of course,' said his lordship, 'know all about principles, and so forth, and some of them tell the public occasionally a great deal concerning them. But the sort of thing is never discussed in companies like this. You might as well expect men at the universities to talk the classics at wine parties—and that, you know, is strictly forbidden.'

May, too, did not know that the society, like men of sense, were in the habit of paying considerable attention to such a dinner as could be provided at the 'Star and Garter,' when a *carte blanche* was given by a man like Mr. Mandeville, and when it was known that the *convives* were well aware when the landlord was false to his trust. The dinner to her was as a dream; and, but for the agreeable gallantries of Mr.

Mandeville on the one side, and the easy entertaining power of Lord Arthur on the other, she would have sunk into mere listlessness long before the dessert was on the table. She had no need to sit much longer after that; for Mrs. Grandison soon gave her a certain telegraphic glance—which would be understood at a dinner-table, though its lady-recipient were a native of the Fiji Islands—indicating that she might retire.

Then came the usual pause in conversation, general rising, and elaborate assistance of the ladies out of the room, on the part of those nearest the door, after which the usual relapse into arrested topics, and a common dash into the dessert, as if the ladies had never had any existence. The ladies went out to walk upon the terrace, where the moon made the atmosphere as light as day.

At Mr. Manton's.

It was rather a dull dinner than otherwise—that is to say, as far as the guests were concerned. Collectively there was a great deal of animation, but individually there was just a little dulness. Captain Halidame began well, but broke down; for after a time he began to find that wine with him had passed the point of exhilaration, and began to depress. His cares came upon him like demons whenever there was a pause in the conversation; and he was the cause of more pauses than one. Mr. Manton, addicted as he was to a large style of talk, found that he was without an impressionable audience. Halidame was rather too old and experienced to enter into the vigorous views of life put forth from the Ensign's point of view; and after hearing a great many crude ideas elaborated by that rather crude young gentleman—who did his best, by-the-way, and was a very good fellow—fairly succumbed, felt dull, and rather prematurely, at the conclusion of dinner, thought he would like a little seltzer and brandy—not to say a cigar, to which he found, however, beforehand, that Lucy had not the smallest objection. The last was a relief to Manton,

who was afraid that smoking might compromise him, as a newly-married man, in the eyes of his guest. So when Lucy said, 'Nonsense, Frank. Have your cigar, as you know you always do,' he was quite enchanted; and when Halidame made some philosophical remarks about the importance of a wife sympathising in her husband's pleasures, he thought his friend a wonderfully good fellow, and saw that his wife was even more of a trump than he had believed her before—and that was no small advance, I can tell you, in his estimation of that lady, whom he loved with all his Ensign heart. So he ordered up cigars of the biggest and best; and he and Halidame surrendered themselves to the enjoyment of the weed, and even made jocose allusions to the possibility of Mrs. Manton joining in a mild cigarette, like the ladies in Spain, and so forth. But Lucy was not quite wild, and was not in her best spirits. She would rather have been alone with her husband, to talk over their own affairs, and was by no means so pleased as she thought she would be in the morning at the addition of a third person—the first third person, indeed, that she had experienced in her new estate. And she sympathized, too, with Halidame as one deeply in love, and pining to behold the object of his passion. She did not dream of other troubles that might beset him, and attributed his depression entirely to what, on the part of her sex in general, she considered a complimentary cause. So, rather earlier than would otherwise have been the case, there seemed a general inclination to return to town.

But before breaking up the party, Lucy said, under the impression that Halidame required distraction—

'Frank, why should not Captain Halidame go with us to the Imperial on Saturday to see the new actress?'

'I shall be awfully pleased if you will,' said Manton, referring the question to Halidame, and delighted to please his wife.

'I have heard,' pursued Lucy, 'that she will do wonders—that she

is an extraordinary person, and will take the town by storm.'

Manton had heard the same, and so had Halidame. Manton had already secured a box for the occasion; and it was agreed that Halidame should join the newly-married couple. Conversation subsided again after this arrangement, and then it was determined to order the carriage. But pending the preparation of the equipage, it was agreed that the party should walk upon the terrace.

'What a beautiful moon!' said Lucy, looking through the window. 'I never saw anything like it at Shuttleton.'

CHAPTER XIX.

ON THE TERRACE.

May was not in the habit of making too much of the moon on slight sentimental provocation; but she felt the secret and mysterious influence of that luminary, as any young lady must feel it upon occasion, unless she be quite given up to bonnets and mundane bewilderments of a kindred kind, such as are commonly assigned to her sex. The moon, you know, in England is not the same moon—except as regards mere matter of fact—as the moon of southern or eastern latitudes. There, whatever astronomers may say, it is twice as big, and makes the heavens seem twice as high. But even in our drear dull native land it is a most meritorious orb when the atmosphere will let it have its own way; and I doubt if it is ever seen to greater advantage than when its rays fall over lovely Richmond in connection with the Star and Garter.* So May must be pardoned if she indulged in a little rapture, born of the beautiful night, as she walked in her own beauty, beside the actress.

She expressed herself in very simple terms, however, as ladies, as well as men, must do, if they wish to escape the scoff of ungenial souls.

'I enjoy this thoroughly,' was all

* Our story was written before the old Star and Garter became, unhappily, a thing of the past.

she said; 'it is a delightful escape from that heated room and all those strange people.'

Mrs. Grandison was a congenial soul—to a certain extent. She quite appreciated the mapon, and respected it as a very proper accessory to the universe, intended principally to give effect to the flat in a set scene, and to be the occasion for a great many elevated sentiments, without which—as she was used to say in depreciation of certain lowering tendencies of the drama—plays could not go on. But she always kept the moon in its proper place—let it know its station—and was not prepared to give it any preference over practical considerations.

So she gave May a piece of advice when she found that young lady doing anything so undramatic as asserting her own sensations.

'My dear child,' said she; 'you should not talk of an escape; the society which we have left is of a most distinguished kind, and calculated to make your fortune. You have been received in it in a manner that very few young ladies going on the stage have ever been received before—as a general rule you know they are kept down—and you should be proud of the impression you have created; instead of running away as soon as possible, and falling in love with a fine night, you should think—if I may tell you—of what is before you in the world.'

May sighed—there is great meaning in sighing, and very few people sigh in earnest.

'But what am I to do?' she said; 'I don't like the kind of scene—and certainly not all the people—and I like the fresh air and the moonlight, and prefer to be here with you. Why should I not say so?'

'There is no harm in saying so,' rejoined the actress; 'but what I fear is that you feel what you say. You ought to have been a little more complaisant to Mr. Mandeville, who has paid you an attention that he was never known to pay a *débutante* before, though when once they have possession of the public there is nothing that he will not do for them. To be sure Mr. Mandeville

is a prince in his way, and can afford to hazard a little. He is 'so rich, and, in the disposition of his money, so respectable. He has built a theatre, as we know, and he is now building a church. He says that a man does not feel settled in life until he has a theatre of his own and a church of his own—a charming idea, is it not?'

'Certainly,' said May, 'I ought to be grateful to Mr. Mandeville; but I do not quite like him, and—I do not quite like his friends.'

'Fie, fie,' said Mrs. Grandison; 'you must not say such things. Surely you found Lord Arthur a charming companion?'

'Well, he was one of the best,' May rejoined; 'but I do not understand the people generally—perhaps I shall appreciate them better one of these days.'

'I hope so indeed,' said Mrs. Grandison; 'for a great deal depends upon what people of the kind say of you. The public are like sheep; a few lead, the rest follow, and the success of a *débutante* depends mainly upon the manner in which she is puffed at first. If she has an immense deal in her she may make her way in spite of obstacles; but she will find no such obstacle as not finding a theatre where she can be properly brought out. If her manager is in her favour he can absolutely force her upon the public.'

'But surely,' urged May, 'he cannot do that if the public will not have her.'

'I tell you again,' said Mrs. Grandison, with emphasis, 'an actress or an actor is just like a piece, and you surely know what is done with a piece. A play upon which a certain amount of money has been spent must be played—the theatre cannot afford to waste it. It is a failure, say, on the first night, or rather on the second, for that is the real test. The failure is not recognized. The play is announced for nightly repetition until further notice; and by dint of filling the theatre with paper—orders, you know, my dear—and getting all sorts of favourable things said in the journals, the piece, whatever

it be, is sure to be a success at last, in the hands of an enterprising manager. The simple question is—as in other speculations—how long can he go on losing? An actress is in much the same position, and you ought to be greatly obliged to Mr. Mandeville for being disposed—as he evidently is—to back you up.’

‘But I thought,’ said May, forgetting all about the moon in this sudden suggestion as to her own affairs—‘I thought that I was to make a success—a great success—in the beginning—to carry the town as you call it—and be independent of everybody.’

‘My dear child,’ replied the actress, ‘you can never be independent of managers unless you can take a theatre for yourself, and then people will say that you can do nothing unless you take a theatre. An actress with a theatre of her own is always in an invidious position. She naturally takes the leading business, and then people say that she does so on account of her position only. She has enemies on all sides in her own theatre.’

All this, and a little more, which Mrs. Grandison did not fail to impress upon her friend, was very discouraging to May, and she began to think that a theatrical career was not likely to realize her dreams.

She was musing in this new train of thought, still walking to and fro in the moonlight, when her ear caught the sound of voices more familiar to her than those of Mr. Mandeville’s guests in the dining-room—recalling as they did times which seemed long past, for they were times when she knew no Mrs. Grandison and had never thought of the theatre.

And then she saw, as clearly almost as she would have seen them at noonday, her old friend Lucy Cartwright, and her mysterious acquaintance, Cecil Halidame. They were walking together, accompanied by a third person, a gentleman whom she did not know.

Lucy recognized May almost at the same moment, and the moment after the friends were in each other’s arms.

Lucy, you may be sure, was the first to speak.

‘Dearest May,’ she cried; ‘what a happy chance this is! I have been looking for you and asking about you everywhere for the last three months. Why did you not tell me where you were going—leave me your address? It was too cruel, and when you knew how fond I was of you!’

May was not proof against the reproach so kindly conveyed. She was a great actress, very probably, prepared to carry the town to any extent, but she broke down at this little bit of an ordeal and shed shamefully natural tears.

‘My dear Lucy,’ she cried, ‘can you forget how it was? Can you forget that you were away from Shuttleton just at the time—paying a round of visits—and that our relations with your family were such that we—that I—did not, as you may suppose, like to ask for your address?’

Lucy did remember that she had done May an injustice, and that of the two she herself had been most open to the charge of neglect; but it was not her way to enter into such particulars, so she contented herself by calling her friend a little goose, and laughing at her for feeling any concern in the matter.

‘You know I did not mean to reproach you,’ she said, assuming the air of the aggrieved party; ‘how can you be so foolish? May, I am ashamed of you.’

So May accepted the position assigned her, and consented to be pacified; and they laughed the difficulty off, and when Lucy told her that she had got married, they were as happy as birds singing on the same branch.

It was at this stage of the proceedings that May remembered the presence of Halidame, and as soon as she looked in his direction that gentleman came forward.

‘This is a very happy chance,’ he said, ‘that has given me the pleasure of seeing you again.’

And he extended his hand, which May took without thinking whether she ought to take it or not. The next moment, however, a vivid re-

membrance of the scene at the ball came over her, and then of his strange letter—a document which she had preserved, but never dared to show to her father. She was at once embarrassed and constrained; while Halidame, observing her confusion, became himself even more confused. There was a guilty look about him, too, as if he had done her wrong.

Neither of the two could speak another word; but here, fortunately, Lucy came to their relief. She had as much to tell May as she had had to tell Halidame, and she told it, with her usual impulsiveness and disregard of her husband's discretion.

May was amused, you may be sure, at the account of the courtship and marriage of this original pair—a courtship and marriage conceived, as Mrs. Grandison afterwards remarked, in the true spirit of comedy. For Mrs. Grandison could not help hearing the important communication in all its details, and the moon might have heard it too for all Lucy seemed to care.

Mr. Manton looked awkward during the recital, and felt awkward, too, I dare say; but Lucy soon brought him to a sense of his responsibility by presenting him in proper form to her friend; after which May presented Mrs. Grandison to both, and Manton presented Halidame to Mrs. Grandison, so that the whole party were soon upon speaking terms, and walked, as before, in the light of the moon.

Lucy for some little time monopolized May, while Manton, who was very bold with everybody who was not his wife, slid into friendly converse with the actress, who, finding herself with a stranger, went through as many episodes in the career of Marie Antoinette as circumstances would permit. Manton, of course, was dazzled, and thought that he had seldom met with so charming a person; but he could not, as he afterwards said, 'make her out,' and he had no idea of her connection with the stage to help him to a solution.

Halidame meanwhile walked alone. His thoughts were bent upon May,

and matters in which May was concerned.

'What a fatality,' said he to himself, 'that I should meet her this night of all others!'

And then his thoughts took a very sad turn; but, impelled by the temptation, he determined, if possible, to have a few words with her, however purposeless, alone. An opportunity presently presented itself, for Lucy left May's arm, or rather her waist, to go and say something to her husband.

Halidame was by May's side in a moment.

'Miss Pemberton,' he said, 'how I have longed for this opportunity!'

'Captain Halidame,' replied the lady, walking by his side rather to avoid the chance of being overheard than for any other reason, 'I know not what to think of you. You have sought me out upon a very short acquaintance to make me the object of a very unpleasant confidence—a confidence which I ought not to respect, and one upon which you seem disposed to presume. I am willing to consider you as a friend; but even as a friend you have no right to make the condition you did. I can assure you that your conduct has given me great pain, and at the present moment—'

'But listen to me,' Halidame interrupted; 'do not misjudge me. I am ashamed—'

'And why ashamed?' interrupted May in her turn. 'I see nothing wrong that you have done beyond the cruel imposition you have placed upon me not to make known my knowledge of you to my father.'

This was an admission which she did not mean to make; but Halidame took advantage of it.

'But May—if I may call you by that sweet name—that condition is the only one by which I can venture to declare my love.'

May was now indignant.

'You have no right, Captain Halidame,' she said, imperiously, 'to talk in this manner to me. I have never given you the right; you ought not to assume it. And if there is danger in a meeting between you and my father I warn



[Dressed as Adelaide Linton.]

ON THE TERRACE.

'You have - I thought it was agreed that you were never to cross my path; and yet I find you and my daughter.'

From 'Raffles of Love,' Chapter XIX.



you that the danger is present. He may be here at any moment.'

And May looked anxiously towards the house.

Halidame became violently agitated.

'He is here then?' he cried. 'Let us leave this place at once.'

And he took May's hand, as if to compel her acquiescence.

'This is too much,' said May, shaking him off; 'I will not be persecuted. What is it, Captain Halidame, that you mean?'

And the girl made a stand, staring him in the face, and defying him, as it seemed, to declare himself.

Mrs. Grandison meantime was about to rejoin her friend, when Lucy said—

'Oh, pray don't interfere with them—they are only love-making—they have not met for some time.'

Lucy was one of those young ladies who think that two persons of conflicting sexes can never be together without being so engaged; and the assumption was quite a gratuitous one in the present case, being founded, as far as she knew, only upon the fact that Halidame and May had danced a great deal together at the ball.

Mrs. Grandison's first impulse, from dramatic force of habit, was to prevent the course of true love from running too smoothly; but considering that the affair was none of hers, and that the young lady might possibly be engaged with the consent of her father, she abstained from interference, contenting herself with the by-play of watching without being observed, while she continued her conversation with the newly-married couple.

While so engaged she observed another addition to the party on the terrace. It was Captain Pemberton, looking doubtless for his daughter.

The next moment he seemed to have discerned her; for he advanced carelessly in her direction.

'I am afraid, May,' he observed, 'it is getting rather cold for you to be out here, and without your mantle too.'

He was within a couple of paces of the pair. On hearing the voice

Halidame gave a great start, then he turned round, and the two men met face to face.

There was a pause, for neither was prepared for the meeting. To Halidame the possibility had only just been suggested, while such an event was far away from Pemberton's thoughts. Then they glared at one another with looks of such implacable enmity that May cried aloud in terror.

There was a difference, however, in the manifestations of the two men. Pemberton was red with passion; Halidame was deadly white—surely not from fear, though he quailed under the glance opposed to him, and showed none of the aggressiveness which marked the manner of the other.

'My dear father!' cried May, clinging to him in strong agitation, 'what does this mean? Tell me. Do you know this—this gentleman?'

'You here!' said Pemberton, disregarding his daughter's question, and addressing himself to Halidame. 'You here! I thought it was agreed that you were never to cross my path; and yet I find you with my daughter!'

'Captain Pemberton,' returned Halidame, in a voice almost humble in tone, 'I am well aware of the condition, and I have always endeavoured to observe it. Miss Pemberton can witness how I took every precaution when there seemed danger of us meeting months ago, to avoid such an accident, which is as painful to me as it can be to you. To-night a circumstance which I could not have contemplated has brought us together, and it shall not be my fault if the pain is prolonged.'

And he made a movement as if to go; but Pemberton had heard words which gave new force to his anger. Disengaging himself from his daughter's arms he turned towards May and said—

'What is this, May, about months ago? Can it be possible that you have made the acquaintance of my bitterest enemy—the author of all my misery in life—and associated with him in secret?'

Poor May was in agonies.

'Hear me, hear me!' she cried. 'I was not so much to blame as you think. I will tell you all, but not here. What I did was to save you pain—and worse than pain, so I was led to believe.'

Pemberton had the gentlest of natures, and he dearly loved his daughter. His doubt of her was over at once. He took her hand fondly, and said—

'My poor child, forgive me if for a moment I wronged you. I *do* believe you, and will not say a word of blame. But you have made an unhappy mistake in having any association with this man, and must never see him again. As for you, sir, go, unless you wish to add further injury to that which you have already inflicted, and tempt me to forget the obligation I am under towards you.'

Halidame had not a word to say; he looked thoroughly humiliated. May had not a word to say either; she was weeping on her father's shoulder.

How the two men might have parted I will not venture to guess, but there was a movement upon the terrace and several persons approached the group. The general body of Mr. Mandeville's guests were scattered about. It was time, therefore, to put an end to the scene, and the necessity gave presence of mind to all engaged in it. Halidame bowed and walked away with apparent composure to the spot where Mrs. Grandison was still in conversation with the Mantons, and May recovered her calmness with a violent effort and took her father's arm. The presence of uninterested persons was a relief to them both, and even the noisiness of some of the company was a welcome distraction.

Halidame somewhat abruptly took his leave of the Mantons, declining a seat in their carriage, for reasons which he did not very clearly make out. When he had gone there was a general remark upon his pale and agitated appearance.

'There was something very dramatic, apparently, in his interview with Captain Pemberton,' suggested Mrs. Grandison.

'Oh! it is nothing, I dare say,' said Lucy. 'I suppose Captain Pemberton doesn't approve of him as a suitor; but that's easily got over; he will come round, and if he doesn't they can run away—can't they, Frank?'

Frank, who was destined to discomfiture that day, admitted that such a proceeding as the latter was within the limits of possibility.

'But see,' continued Lucy, 'the Pembertons are going—I must see May before she leaves.'

Lucy was never very long in carrying out her intentions. The next minute she was re-establishing relations with Captain Pemberton, and telling him, in his turn, all about her marriage, its attendant circumstances being described with her usual dramatic force. It did not occur to her, though most persons would have perceived the fact, that the captain was in a state of mind to take about as much interest in the narrative as he would have taken in the story of Cinderella and the Glass Slipper, related with a view to his special sympathy, and the exigence of his private opinion concerning the conduct of all the parties concerned.

However, the story came to an end at last, and then Lucy insisted upon knowing where May was staying, that she might go to see her. So May gave her the address in Brompton Row, with the suggestion, however, inspired by Mrs. Grandison, that she would be too much engaged to see anybody during the rest of the week—it was then Wednesday.

Lucy thought such a succession of engagements as seemed to be implied rather strange in a person of May's retired habits; but she made any allowance for the temptations of town, and arranged to see her dear friend on the following Monday.

The Pembertons were then allowed to depart in peace; and they took the road, as before, in Mr. Mandeville's magnificent carriage, the appearance of which vehicle, with the high steppers' tails whisking in the lamplight, excited general admiration on the part of the other guests, whose arrangements for re-

turning to town were of a comparatively abject character. Some of them, indeed, who had made no arrangements at all were reduced to chance cab; and one of the latter—it was a young poet of spasmodic tendencies—seems to have arrived home at an uncertain hour, for, actuated by an impracticable desire to return by the river, he betook himself to the banks, and was found by an opportune policeman gibbering on a jetty at two o'clock in the morning.

But things like this, you know, will be at every great festivity; and everybody said that Mr. Mandeville's party was a great success, and that the fair lady who was its occasion would be a great success also.

CHAPTER XX.

THE GREAT INDIA AMELIORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESOURCES COMPANY.

Captain Pemberton called upon Sir Norman Halidame on the day after the dinner at Richmond. We have not met the baronet since the captain's first visit upon the pecuniary affair that brought him to town. But I am happy to say that upon the present occasion Sir Norman was looking remarkably well, and was, to judge by appearances, more easy in his mind than he had been for some time past. He had consented, after a long conflict with opposing sensibilities, to go a little into business, and there was just now more than one public company engaging his attention. It was not for want of solicitation that he had abstained for years past from connection with the City. Men whom he knew had continually asked for his name as a director in schemes of many kinds, absolving him from responsibility even as far as shares were concerned, and placing within his reach liberal fees for the mere attendance at meetings. But Sir Norman was painfully punctilious—so his City friends called it—about meddling in matters that he did not understand, and said that there must be something wrong in

an undertaking which could afford to pay him, for doing nothing, a great deal more than it paid a hard-working clerk. But as projects from time to time were forced upon his attention, he began to think it possible that they might be worth pursuit, and once aroused into feeling an interest in a scheme for its own sake, he was by degrees drawn into the groove, and found himself growing fond of the game with a consequent appreciation of the stakes. He was upon dangerous ground, but was not likely to go very wrong, though it is difficult to say what the best of men may not do in the City when they once get into the heat of battle.

Sir Norman had done a welcome piece of service for Captain Pemberton by procuring for him the position of a paid director in a very promising company which applied the principle of life assurance to matrimonial arrangements, and made the policies fall due when the assurers married instead of when they died, thus giving them the advantage, as the prospectus set forth, of being able to spend the money upon themselves instead of leaving it to their descendants. The profits to the office were calculated from the data that whereas everybody dies, only a certain proportion of the community marries, and that for one marriage which is accomplished there are at least half a dozen broken off. It was a brilliant idea, and promised to work remarkably well. In the meantime it gave Captain Pemberton an income which amounted to considerably more than his half pay, and gave him, besides, a very high opinion of 'the City,' which could give so much for such very little service as he was able to perform.

The scheme on hand, however, concerning which he called upon Sir Norman, was one of a far more extensive character. This was the 'Great India Amelioration and Development of the Resources Company,' the capital of which, with the usual liberality of prospectuses, was fixed at three millions. There was no reason why it should not be ten millions, or even more, as an

ardent promoter suggested; but moderation carried the day, and it was agreed to limit the demand with a modest regard to what was likely to be obtained. The object of the association was to supply every project for improvement in India, which could not obtain a government guarantee, with a private guarantee instead, and thus counteract—so said the prospectus—the working of a selfish and short-sighted policy which, since the period of Plassey, had impeded the progress of our great empire in the East, the brightest jewel of the British crown, and brought incalculable miseries upon the hundred and eighty millions committed to our charge.

Sir Norman, upon the morning in question, drove Captain Pemberton to a meeting of the projectors of the company at the offices in Moorgate Street—drove him in his cabriolet—an old-fashioned vehicle which is fast fading away, but which had the advantage, while it gave its master the trouble of driving in London streets, of at least making him independent of a coachman.

On their way the friends, after giving a little attention to the Great India Amelioration and Development of the Resources Company, talked about some other matters in which they were both privately concerned.

Pemberton, with evident reluctance to allude to the subject, told Sir Norman of his meeting with Cecil Halidame on the previous evening. 'It was a shock to me,' said he, 'that I hoped to have been spared. I thought he was still in India.'

Sir Norman was almost as agitated at the announcement as his friend had been at the fact, and was nearly letting his horse (Sir Norman had better have been in his brougham) bring them into collision with an omnibus.

'So that unhappy man has appeared again,' he said; 'I, too, thought he was in India: but I shall be made aware of his presence here, I suppose, as soon as he wants a hundred pounds, or at any rate thinks that there is a chance of get-

ting it from me. And money is not the worst of it, as you know. There is a wretched Baboo, a cringing Calcutta native, who has pursued me for years, like an evil genius, and bled me whenever he chose, under an implied threat of ruining my character in society by setting a certain story going, with me for its hero. He is unfortunately connected with this company in Moorgate Street, and I should not wonder if we met him to-day. What can I do? I cannot bring the whole story out and denounce my brother. Apart from the tenderness which I bear to him, the reflected disgrace would be a blow to me; so all I can do is to pacify the Baboo as I best may. The Baboo is over here as the agent of a deposed rajah, and while working the rajah's case—which he will never gain—considers, I suppose, that it is all fair in business to get a little advantage in the way of money out of me, and a little more advantage in the way of such social influence as he can gain from my association.'

While Sir Norman and Captain Pemberton were discoursing upon this evidently unpleasant subject, a select society was assembled at the offices of the company in Moorgate Street.

The room in which they were gathered was a severely official apartment, furnished with a very long mahogany table holding a very large inkstand and surrounded by very heavy chairs, and provided, in one corner, with an iron safe containing a tin japanned box. It was intended for the temporary board-room when there should happen to be a board; and how to get a board together was now the business in hand.

Of the several gentlemen who were seated at the upper end of the table the first claiming attention is Mr. Clamberley, the promoter, *i.e.*, the person who evolved the idea of the Great India Amelioration and Development of the Resources Company from the depths of his moral consciousness—a depository, it would seem, of a great many ideas of the same kind, to judge by the number which he had evolved from time to

time under circumstances similar to the present.

Mr. Clamberley was the smoothest man you ever saw. He had a smooth face surmounted with smooth hair, and embellished with smooth features; his smile was smooth, so was his manner, and so were the tones of his voice. His dress was as smooth as the rest of him. It was rich as fashion will allow, but characterised by a grand simplicity which had more effect than any amount of foppery; and the glimpses you got of his linen were like so many flashes of light. His ornaments were few, but massive and costly, and greatly inculcative, I should say, of pecuniary confidence. He wore his gloves in his pocket, as he did not consider those appendages looked well in the City, and for the same reason he did not carry a cane, though he resumed both those articles when he went westward of an evening. If Mr. Clamberley was anything besides smooth he was most certainly keen, and nobody who noticed his eye when he spoke could mistake the fact. He prided himself, I believe, in combining the iron hand with the velvet glove, and between the two he had given hard grips at a great many things in his time.

Next to Mr. Clamberley sat a man who also gave you a considerable idea of acuteness. He had a face full of quick intelligence, and was a picture of activity from his eyes to the tips of his fingers. This was Mr. Markwell, the solicitor to the company. He was a somewhat younger man than Mr. Clamberley seemed to be, and might be five-and-thirty or thereabouts. He was carelessly dressed in comparison with the compact promoter, and his costume was principally remarkable for a very capacious frock-coat, furnished with wonderful inside pockets, in whose depths he carried papers enough to cover an office-table.

The third person, who had the large inkstand before him, and was engaged in directing some letters to addresses taken from a 'Court Guide' at his elbow, had more modest pretensions, apparently, than either of his companions. He looked younger,

too, than the others, but his appearance was such as is frequently deceptive on this score. He was a little man, with a little face and head, and little features to correspond. His face was destitute of hair, and what he had on his head was thin and weak. He wore a white cravat, the rest of his dress being black, giving him a clerical aspect. He had a habit of holding his head thrust forward and thrown up, as if his nose—a little turned up too on its own account—was trying to get a look at his eyes; and for this reason he always seemed to be looking over people rather than at them as he talked, and the general impression he conveyed was that of being sly. I have said that he had a somewhat clerical appearance; but it was not suggestive of the Establishment, and his legs in particular were decidedly Dissenting.

It happened, however, that Mr. Sharpenal—for that was his name—had nothing to do with either church or chapel, as far as clerical functions were concerned; but he had been secretary of one or two charitable societies, and associated a great deal with what is called the serious world, and I believe he considered that the *primâ facie* respectability attached to a white cravat was worth several hundred a year to him. Of late, however, he had been less engaged than usual in the cause of charity, and had been principally in a connection where there is a great deal more taking than giving, and the interests of strangers are regarded as irrelevant to the business in hand. In other words, he had been helping Mr. Clamberley with some of his companies, and might be regarded as that gentleman's chronic 'secretary *pro tem.*' It was in this position that he had joined the present speculation; for he never held a permanent office—such an arrangement not suiting his intriguing temperament—a fact which he sometimes found out for himself, though there had been occasions when the discovery was anticipated by other people.

'Yes,' said Mr. Clamberley, with cheerful candour, and in continuation of a conversation which I have

interrupted, 'I am not much charmed with appearances. We ought to have got a director of some kind by this time. The first director is everything,' he added, musingly, for his companions did not require the information. 'When one has come another will follow, but nobody likes to be the first on such a paper as this.'

And Mr. Clamberley looked at the title-page of the prospectus which he held in his hand with an air of sincere pity for so very promising a document. It set forth the name of the Company in full; the amount of the capital was figured with charming exactness; the names of the solicitors and standing counsel were given without the mistake of a letter; the great banking houses which had consented to receive the deposits of shareholders (there were two, for the sake of convenience and connection, to say nothing of the chance of one of them being tempted by too large a trust into dangerous speculation) were synonyms for credit; and the name of the Secretary *pro tem.* was an assurance of intelligence and assiduity. But under that important heading, 'Board of Directors,' there was a dreary blank—a Sahara of helplessness—so that the addition of 'With power to add to their number,' printed very low down, looked very much like a sarcasm, calculated to make the unreflecting laugh, as it certainly made the judicious grieve upon this occasion.

'Yes, if we could only get one,' said Mr. Sharpenal, 'the rest would follow like sheep. As in the case of the gentleman who thought he could walk after his head was taken off, it is the *premier pas qui coûte*.'

In their intimate conversations our friends permitted themselves these little jests at the expense of the public. In common with most people who depend upon the favour of that interesting multitude, they had the profoundest contempt for its intellectual capacity. Mrs. Grandison on the previous evening had used precisely the same comparison in reference to the patrons of the drama. Novelists, however, I am

bound to say, are an exception to this vicious rule, and have an invariable respect for their readers.

'We have not got to the public yet,' observed Markwell; 'at present we are only at the private influence point; and I am afraid, Clamberley, that that horrible break down of yours in the "Criminal Charges Defence Association" has damaged us a great deal. I thought at the time that it was rather a hazardous calculation—to suppose that there is a sufficiently large portion of the public intending to commit crime or expecting to be accused of it, to supply the capital proposed.'

Clamberley smiled, and remarked that at least the idea was a novel one, and the other two admitted this point with generous concession.

They talked then of various great men in the City and elsewhere whom they would like to get.

'Do you know anything of Scaramouch, the new Member for Bribeley?' asked Markwell of the Secretary *pro tem.*

'No; but I can get at him,' was the answer. 'He of course has a mint of money, and carries weight just now. He is a Life Governor of the Orphan Home for the Destitute Children of Deceased Prizefighters, and the Secretary owes me a favour—that is to say he owes me cash. Yes, I think I can get at him.'

And with the quiet energy which characterized all his actions Sharp-renal dashed off a letter to the Secretary of the Orphan Home for the Destitute Children of Deceased Prizefighters, enclosing a prospectus of the Great India Amelioration and Development of the Resources Company.

When the letter was placed with the others, ready for the post, the Secretary *pro tem.* volunteered a piece of advice.

'I am really of opinion,' he said, 'that, with such an object as ours, we ought to canvass among the clergy and the supporters of charitable institutions. They form an immense class, and are not half tapped yet. There are depths in

the serious public that have never yet been sounded by the plummet of speculation.'

The others laughed heartily at this burst of metaphorical vigour.

'You are always for going at the serious public,' said Clamberley.

'And get very little out of them, after all,' added Markwell.

'But I mean what I say in this case,' urged Sharpenal.

'Well, then, suppose we try the serious public this time,' suggested the promoter, glancing at Markwell.

'And I say yes,' said the solicitor. 'We'll see what Sharpenal can do for us.'

So the point was agreed on, and Sharpenal said that it should not be his fault if the serious public had a quiet life of it for the next fortnight to come.

'I told you, did I not,' said Markwell, 'that I had hopes of a client of mine, Sir Norman Halidame. He has no money, but stands well in the world, and will do, not to head the list, but to follow. For our decoy elephant I think we must rely for the present upon Scaramouch. By-the-way, Halidame will be here presently. At least he promised to come, and to bring with him a military friend who has served in India, and will make a capital agent out there—should we ever want one. He is on half pay now, but would retire altogether if he got the appointment.'

The announcement of a probable director was received with some satisfaction; and then followed another discussion upon people who ought to be got.

'I know of a man,' said Markwell, 'who would not do for a director, but is likely to become a large shareholder. He is a very rich man, but rather cracked in the upper story.'

'My dear sir,' cried Sharpenal, in a transport of pleasure, 'that is precisely the combination we require.'

The others laughed again at Sharpenal's enthusiasm, but warned him not to talk in that way when the strangers came. The Secretary

pro tem. did not deign to reply to the caution except by asking his friends if they had ever known him to make a fool of himself; and they frankly admitted that they never had.

Here a clerk entered the room, and the three assumed an appearance of business of an inscrutable nature, involving the welfare of the hundred and eighty millions confided to our charge in our great empire in the East, the brightest jewel in the British crown. The hundred and eighty millions, I suspect, had never yet been mentioned in the board-room, except as a statistic connected with the prospectus.

The clerk announced the arrival of Sir Norman Halidame and Captain Pemberton, and those gentlemen were at once shown in.

The hundred and eighty millions and their numerous wants were visibly depicted upon the faces of the three gentlemen already in the room as they rose to welcome the new comers, and two of them were being introduced in due form by Mr. Markwell.

'I am delighted to find, Sir Norman,' said the compact promoter, in his smoothest manner, 'that you take sufficient interest in our scheme to honour us with a visit; and Captain Pemberton will also, I hope, accept our thanks for the attention on his part.'

Sir Norman and Captain Pemberton were of course delighted to have the opportunity; and after a little interchange of inanities of the kind which seems a necessary introduction to rational conversation between strangers, Sir Norman and the captain surrendered themselves to an explanation of the advantages of the scheme and its chances of success, such as, in the words of Mr. Clamberley, would be but faintly shadowed forth in the brief limits of a prospectus; and both gentlemen were deeply impressed thereby. With regard to present appearances, nothing, they were assured, could be more promising. The time of year was bad, as so many people were out of town, but assurances of support

were being received daily; and when the list of directors was filled up, and the Company was fairly brought out, the most sanguine expectations of success would doubtless be justified. At present there were not any adhesions to the direction; but several were expected, and the great Mr. Scaramouch, in particular, might almost be counted on. Everything, in fact, seemed so cheering that both Sir Norman and the captain were easily persuaded to put their names down as directors. As far as the latter gentleman was concerned, it was of course understood that, if he went to India, he would occupy all the better position through being a member of the board.

This happy arrangement was followed by a little lunch, sent in with some splendour from a neighbouring hotel; and the party drank success to the Great India Amelioration and Development of the Resources Company in the best

Cliquot in the City. From the enthusiastic tone of the conversation you would suppose that the convives were upon the eve of taking up their residence in a financial paradise of limited liability, where there were no calls, and dividends came naturally like the dews of morning.

There was just a little crumpling of the roses when the guests had taken their leave. As they passed through the outer office they met Baboo Ramchunder Nellore going in. The Baboo was profound in his obeisance to the baronet, who observed towards him a somewhat haughty courtesy. The two, however, shook hands at parting, and seemed to Pemberton very good friends.

But Sir Norman knew his man better. 'I shall hear from that rascal to-morrow,' he said; 'I do not like the expression of his face. I much mistake if he does not mean mischief.'



COLLEGE TUTORS: THE OLD SCHOOL AND THE NEW.

MONSTROUSLY misrepresented as each class of the academical community has been and is, there exists none which is so conspicuously the victim of wilful and chronic caricature as the college tutor and the college don. It has been the business of the present writer to expose before now, in the pages of this magazine, for the public good, some of these absurdities of university fiction-mongers; but the utterly unreal pictures of the social life and economy of Oxford undergraduates with which a credulous public is presented, falls short of the absurd dissimilarity to anything actually existing that is perpetrated when the fancy portrait of those by whom Oxford undergraduates are ruled is attempted. It is exactly as if some dabbler in paints and pigments were to give as the result of the toils of his brush to some future generation a human figure arrayed in the costume of a century since—periwig with powder, triangular hat, kneebreeches and stockings complete, entitling it 'Portrait of a Nineteenth-Century Gentleman in the Dress of the Period.' Every one knows the college tutor and the college don of tradition, painted at full length—a gentleman of middle age, or something more; a clergyman always, severely clad in customary suits of solemn black; a hopeless troglodyte, whose travels scarcely ever lead him outside the precincts of his university town; great at the Greek particles, but ignorant of everything else; a pedant and prig by nature, a tuft-hunter and toady by practice; capacious of port wine, detesting change, a bigot and a Conservative in the worst sense of that word, coined by Sir Robert Peel in one of his unhappiest moments. Sir Thomas Overbury, the English Theophrastus, has already sketched this academical anachronism in his 'Characters,' and we are calmly assured that the sketch of that pungent writer remains in all its essential lineaments a true likeness of the college don of the present day. By

way of correction to these delusive ideas the recollections that will presently be given will be sufficient. There is one point on which, before I go any further, it may be well for a moment to dwell,—I mean the attributes of tuft-hunting and toadyism which, by a mischievous process of association, there is a tendency to associate with the character of the academical powers that be. To the impecunious undergraduate, one is told, these venal officials roar like lions; to the titled sprig of an insane nobility they are meek and submissive as lambs. My Lord Tom Noddy may do what he likes. If he happens to entertain a lively supper-party at his rooms in Canterbury Quad, and please, in the height of his conviviality, to take it into his head to discharge from his window an empty champagne bottle at the head of some passer-by, who turns out to be the censor of his college—or rather 'the House'—it is put down to the generous extravagance of youth. Nay, we are further informed that the academical dignitary, who has narrowly escaped a broken pate, will tell the graceless young rake that he is a credit to his university, and ask, in tones of cringing toleration, how his noble father is, and beg his lordship to enclose his humble respects when he next writes to his titled sire. At the end of term comes the college examination, when the undergraduate members pass in review visibly before the assembled authorities in the common room. My Lord Tom Noddy is told that his conduct is all that could be desired; while poor Jones, who is the son of a poor Welsh parson, and sent to the university only by dint of much pinching parsimony at home, because, though uniformly an excellent and admirably-conducted fellow, he has managed, more by clumsiness than anything else, to give some trivial offence, is told severely that this sort of thing must not occur again, or the consequences will be more serious to him and to his father than the clemency of the college now

allows them to be. To sum up this view, the two things which are worshipped by the Oxford don are money and rank, and within certain very broad limits the possessors of these may do anything which the most unbridled license could desire.

It is needless to say how utterly false all this is, and it is only because this is no exaggeration of what has been given us in one or two quarters within the last few months, as a life-like portraiture of the college don of the present day, that the fiction has been recapitulated here. Thus much may be said without fear: there is no place in the world where social antecedents, whether in the way of position or means, have so little weight as at Oxford—no place where a lad is thought so little of for what he is, and valued so exclusively for what he does. On the whole, it is not too much to say that the deportment of college tutors towards those who are their pupils is of a description almost ostentatiously the reverse of anything like adulation either of birth or of wealth; and something more than a mere spirit of contradiction to the fables served up as facts might prompt the remark that the plebeian is more likely to win the presumptive approval of the college tutor of the day than the recognised patrician. It is about as true to say that the academical don in a general way regards rank with exceptional favour, as to represent him as a man knowing nothing of the world outside his college, a port-wine bibbing pedant, and a priggish recluse.

It is intended here to use the expression 'college tutor' in the widest significance in which it can be taken. In a general way the tutors of a college administer the tuition and supervise the welfare of its junior members. In a technical sense the undergraduate will speak of his tutor as the gentleman who by a pleasant academical fiction is supposed to take a friendly interest in him throughout his career, even though it is quite possible he may never be brought into actual contact with him, may never attend his lectures, and may only interchange

salutations with him on the occasion of the tutorial breakfast to which he was invited in the course of his first term. The institution of college tutors in this sense is a theory, and nothing more. If an undergraduate is unfortunate enough to get into trouble, it is the dean of his college who pulls him up, and it is quite an accident—not because it is an attribute of his official capacity—if his tutor interferes to help him out. In a general way the college tutor only exists to his pupil as a college teacher, whose lectures he may or may not happen to attend. The most intimate personal relations which the undergraduate is likely to maintain with any tutorial dignitary will be with his private tutor, or, to use the vernacular, his 'coach,' if he has one, which coach may be or may not be—usually it is the latter—a member of the same college.

Oxford is supposed to be the centre and the citadel of everything that is Conservative; yet nowhere else in the world does change follow change with such rapidity. These vicissitudes are not confined to any one side or any one department of the place. Colleges change their ribbons, and the 'schools' change their great authorities and manuals. Now it is the theories of this philosopher, or this school of philosophers, which are in the ascendant, now of that. At one time a first class is only attainable by those who have been coached along the high *a priori* road of speculation; at another time the honour can alone be gained beneath the auspices and the leadership of Mr. Mill and his friends. The scepticism of to-day becomes the belief of to-morrow. Mommsen is the last destructive critic of Roman history whom we have had, and is enthroned accordingly; but if a theory more ingeniously novel or recklessly iconoclastic than the German author whom Dr. Hickson has translated were to be propounded, Mommsen would be banished, and the propounder of the theory in question would be hailed as the hero of the hour. Nothing can have changed more entirely at Oxford in the course

of the last twenty-five years than the whole composition of the body of college tutors. The aged branches of a venerable tree have been religiously hid out of sight; instead we have a well-selected supply of new, healthy, and vigorous shoots. To a very great extent the duty of teaching at Oxford has passed out of the hands of middle-aged men, and come into the hands of young men. By this step what has been gained in activity has not been lost in experience. The fresher the teacher is from the examinations, and the more *au courant* with the latest examinational method, the more successful his teaching is likely to be; the younger he is the more likely, too, he is to teach well. Facts justify these expectations. College lectures have ceased to be literary farces. It is absolutely possible to learn at them. They do something more than merely discharge the duty of academical roll-calls, which was all they once did. Life and energy have been infused into them, and the activity of the college tutor has greatly lessened the necessity of the out college coach. In every good college at Oxford the undergraduate, given ability, may procure the highest honours of the place without the expense of coaching. It is possible that in cases of extreme stupidity and backwardness the services of a special private tutor may become a practical necessity, and in these cases why should the victim be sent to Oxford at all? but in the vast majority of cases men 'coach' from tradition—just as, to quit the region of the metaphorical, and to come to that of actual locomotion, there are still people so fondly wedded to the past that they will not take advantage of the railway—as the easiest means of repairing the effects of a long course of previous habitual idleness.

When I first went up to Boniface, this condition of things tutorial had not been realised. No doubt our tutors were excellent in their way, and did their work conscientiously. They were by no means of the old port wine régime, though they were considerably senior to the gentlemen who now discharge, very likely

with greater efficiency, the duties of instructing the Boniface undergraduates in Oxford studies. However, I am not concerned so much with scholastic and educational reminiscences and comparisons, as with those which are personal and social. I found then, as I have hinted, on my arrival among the august society of Boniface, in a kind of transition state existing as regarded the composition, customs, and ways of its governing body. The new régime had not yet begun, and the old had commenced to expire. There was a good deal of the time-honoured slumberous nonchalance in the air, but there were also several signs that a spirit of activity was stirring; and before I left Boniface it had been fairly aroused to that condition of moral energy—that, I believe, is the name of the quality—which it takes a special pride in instilling into the hearts of its alumni. There were, I found, on my entering, a vast number of floating traditions as to the antecedents and private history of our fellows who were in residence, and from whose body new tutors were selected. The most surprising narratives were circulated as to what they were when they had not yet emerged from the undergraduate state themselves, and especially as to their feats and practices during the long vacation. There was one gentleman, in particular—a pleasant little man with a rather neat figure, and a sleepy air—who took life easily and in an almost Epicurean spirit, as to whom it was confidently believed that he was engaged to a Polish princess, whom he had met in one of his long vacation rambles, and whom he was only waiting till a college living, with stipend worthy of his royal bride, should fall vacant to lead to the altar. It was, I remember, objected to this explanation of Mr. Lawless's continued residence at Boniface, that the future husband of a princess would be placed by the worldly condition of his wife beyond the necessity of any such considerations. 'Quite so,' remarked the prosiest youth whom I ever encountered, 'and so it would be in the case of any other princess; but then, remember the condition

of Polish finance just at present.' As for Mr. Lawless's discharges of his college duties, he lectured in a lazy manner enough—though the men who knew much about him would tell you that, though he did not exert himself, he could *an* he would; that his classical acquirements were in reality profound beyond parallel; and that much of his apparently languid manner was the result of his inordinate smoking, in company with the celebrated Professor Vandervelt at Bonn, in whose classic cloister the pair were in the habit of sitting for hours and hours enveloped in clouds of nicotine, discussing the various particles in the Latin language, and suggesting interpretations of vexed passages. Either the Polish princess must have jilted Mr. Lawless, or he the princess, for since that time college livings of every kind have fallen vacant, and been offered to him, but that gentleman still remains at St. Boniface up to the present day.

Perhaps the nearest approach from some points to the Oxford don of tradition, was the Rev. Henry Bloker, to whose hands were entrusted the 'purely disciplinarian part of the college, and who was technically known as the dean. The man gave you the notion of a person whose blood never rose above the temperature that you might expect to find in the veins of a rather chilly codfish. His voice was a monotone: his figure unbending in its uprightness; his neck moving only transversely; his shirt linen of immaculate whiteness, and his coat, &c., of undeviating black. There, motionless, with his back to his mantelpiece, he used to stand, as it seemed, the whole academic year round, occupied either with the task of lecturing to undergraduates on the principles of Latin and Greek prose, or asking them if they could give any satisfactory reason why they failed to attend chapel as often as they ought to have attended. The moveless face and the almost lifeless look of the Rev. Henry Bloker's eye, used to strike terror into the heart of many a timid freshman. If you once displayed timidity, Mr. Bloker felt your weakness, and

treated you with a bullying contempt; the only way to come off the best in any of these disciplinarian encounters was by the display of a determined spirit of fearless self-assertion. I had the satisfaction of seeing this ex-Dean of Boniface marry a famous shrew; but I do not know to which of the pair the laurel of the matrimonial battle is to be awarded. I fear it must be admitted that Mr. Bloker was by no means devoid of an infusion of the true toady spirit. We used to see him emerging from morning chapel, and, the service over, pacing up and down the cloistered quadrangle with the Rev. head of Boniface, Dr. Magnus. Every one knew what those protracted pra-prandial strolls meant. There was a Nemesis brewing for some one. Either some luckless wight was to be sent down, or a common-room was to be held on the proceedings of Smith, who would persist in awaking the college nightly to the echo with loud shrieks of unearthly melody; or Mr. Bloker thought it necessary that at the college meeting to be held to-day, attention should be drawn to the scandalous fact that Jones had been up a year and a quarter, and was not yet through responsions. Never mind, however, what were the excesses, or breaches of discipline, or idleness, of which young De Pumpkin was conscious he had been guilty, that fortunate young aristocrat could look on quite unconcerned from his window at the solemn promenade which filled ordinary undergraduates with horror, as inevitably portending mischief to some one or other of them. 'Hang it!' young De Pumpkin would remark, 'old Bloker would as soon cut off his right hand as cut up rough with me. He's the best thing in dons going—at least so far as I'm concerned. Easiest plan in the world to get him on my side. I get the governor to ask him down once a year, and the thing's done. You should see what fun we have together when he asks me to his *tête* breakfasts. Why, Bloker's actually genial, and positively smiles'—a frame of mind and an expression of countenance which De Pumpkin is

unique in having observed in the person of the Dean of Boniface. I may mention, perhaps, that Mr. Bloker happened to be my college tutor.

Mr. Turvey was quite another specimen of the race, the most hard-working and efficient that in my time Boniface knew. When you had once got beneath the man's exterior, he was an excellent creature enough; but his manner was curious—a mixture of nervousness and confidence, of *bonhomie* and cynicism; something of the Chesterfield, but more, perhaps, of the French professor of deportment. Mr. Turvey was great at gestures, and universally elegant in his attitudes. Cosmopolitanism was his characteristic. All arts, all sciences, and most languages did Mr. Turvey know. At St. Boniface he was currently reported to be the most erudite man in the university. And his lectures—they were genuine lectures, and not merely continuations of the old school construing lessons—delivered in tones studiously modulated, and language elegantly select, in no small measure bore out this belief. The amount of reading which they displayed, the power of assimilating and reproducing knowledge which they implied, was surprising. Mere pass men Mr. Turvey did not greatly court; but the undergraduate who aspired to honours was sure of unlimited encouragement and attention. Occasionally, Mr. Turvey found agreeable scope, in the course of his lectures, for the exercise of his facile wit; and his wit, whatever else it was, was seasonable. 'If you particularly wish to get in, Mr. Peewit, I shall be happy to open the door of that cupboard for you,' remarked Mr. Turvey to an undergraduate of extremely diminutive stature, who in the course of his lecture persisted in playing the tattoo on the panel of Mr. Turvey's receptacle for his china, &c.; and little Peewit instantaneously discontinued the tune. But if Mr. Turvey occasionally made the undergraduate the butt of his pleasant satire, he was at other times his zealous champion. Even Peewit, whom Mr. Turvey loved to 'chaff,'

used to be vehement in his declarations that there was 'no person who would stand up for you at a pinch like Turvey;' and; used to relate encounters—quite apocryphal, of course—which the Dean and Mr. Turvey would hold over the amount of 'sitting upon' to be administered to him (Peewit) when the end of the term was at hand, and collections were impending.

Boniface, so far as its governing body was concerned, was a good deal of a travelling college. There were several of its fellows, not tutors, who were mighty mountaineers; and it was currently rumoured that Mr. Turvey's acquaintance with foreign lands far exceeded that with his own. The centrifugal force used to come strong upon him at the commencement of each long vacation; and Mr. Turvey was the first member of Boniface for whom the messenger was desired to fetch a cab to convey himself and his luggage to the railway station, *en route* for some remote valley in the Carpathians, or some nook in Germany, where the name of Cook was unknown, and the creature called the tourist had not yet been seen. Occasionally it was said that Mr. Turvey varied these pacific expeditions with journeys in regions disturbed with battle and resonant with cannon. It was stated and believed that on one occasion this passion for camp-following had resulted in the seizure of Mr. Turvey, notwithstanding his panglot protestations and assurances, as a spy, and his incarceration for the space of three weeks in a dungeon on the Illyrian frontier, where he was with difficulty recognised by the timely intervention of the British flag.

When Jack Pindar went down from St. Ambrose—it was my fortune to spend a term or two at St. Ambrose before I was elected to a founder's kin exhibition at Boniface—and took the vacant rectory of Slowcum, not to mention the second daughter of the principal of St. Ambrose as his wife, it was generally felt by the undergraduates of that distinguished society that they had lost a friend, not that Mr. Pindar had ever given any positive

evidence of his claim to that popular character. It was his manner chiefly which won him these golden opinions among the junior members of his college; and perhaps a certain set of traditions which were diligently circulated, and devoutly believed in by the undergraduates of St. Ambrose, to the effect that Mr. Pindar's career had, when he himself was in *statu pupillari*, been by no means devoid of the generous indiscretions incidental to the period of undergraduateship, had something to do with it. The senior fellow of St. Ambrose was not popular, and there were curious stories afloat as to the way in which Mr. Pindar openly dared, upon more occasions than one, to beard the lion in his den, and plainly to indicate his contempt for Mr. Wygram, who was some years back the college dean, which by no means lowered him in popular estimation. It is surprising what a magnifying power distance in these cases lends; and the undergraduate of a present period finds no difficulty in exaggerating the most trivial deflection from the path of academical orthodoxy, on the part of one who has been an undergraduate of a past period, into the most heinous of peccadilloes. The scandals which were afloat relative to the eccentricities of Mr. Pindar's doings years ago, *Consule Planco*, would have filled a book, and all were most probably groundless in the same degree. As for the gentleman in question, his manner was uniformly modest and retiring: the only thing which would seem to give colour to these absurdities, and very likely fictions of the undergraduate mind, was the fact that he possessed a beard of considerable dimensions, and perpetually wore a coat which was not remarkable for its clerical cut. Latterly Mr. Pindar threw up his tutorship, and then, of course, a thousand stories were fabricated as to the reasons which had prompted the step. When it was discussed, men would look knowing, and, nudging each other, would talk about 'that night when we met Mr. Pindar, you know where, Jones, eh, and how?' But neither the mystery nor its explana-

tion ever progressed further than this. Mr. Pindar was fond of a good gallop with George Drake's hounds; and the story that his pupils on coming to his lecture-room one morning, as usual, saw the notice, 'Mr. Pindar having an engagement this morning, will not lecture;' and a little later in the day caught a vision of the absentee tutor dismounting in pink and tops at the St. Ambrose gate from a dirt-splashed steed, is undoubtedly true enough. It was thus the fashion to speak of Mr. Pindar as a 'rattling good fellow,' and too go-ahead for the old, crusty St. Ambrose dons—why, as I have said, no one exactly knew, but still so it was.

The college tutors whom we have now seen all belong to the recognised constitutional type: I can count among my reminiscences of the class others of a widely different kind. Young dons these, of a very modern order, upstarts in every sense of the word, loudly professing opinions, simply because they happened to be at variance with the usual Oxford way of thinking, and whose noisy eulogies of novelty were in reality nothing more than bids for notoriety. On the principle that there is no fool like an old fool, there is no don like a young don. Energy, indeed, you get, but weighted with what an amount of insufferable bumptiousness! These gentlemen are no sooner installed in their places than they become infatuated with the idea that everything is going wrong; the hour points to reform, and so they are to be the reformers. Art, intellect, and themselves—these are the three great articles in their creed. By one who watches the tide of changes at present flowing into Oxford, it can scarcely be doubted that there is much to regret in the overweening influence which has latterly been acquired by these theorists and experimentalists, the vile *corpus* on which their experiments are tried being none other than the venerable body of their *Alma Mater* itself. Pleasant it is to turn from these particular specimens of tutorial development once more to the constitutional orthodox type, and to find

oneself in the presence of a don who not only performs his duties faithfully by his college and his pupils, but who is the thorough English gentleman—a man of the stamp which we want for country parsons and for country squires. Such an one was Mr. Bulton, who, in one capacity or another, had been in unintermittent residence at St. Ambrose for the last twenty-five years. A capital coach, and a true friend—a man who enjoyed life generally, and life's good things, but differed as essentially from those Sileni of the common room, whom the ill-informed or wilfully-blind romantic delights to portray, as Hyperion from a satyr. You might have gone a long way when I was a St. Ambrose undergraduate before you would have found so close an approximation to the ideal college tutor as the Rev. Charles Bulton. There are two things which offend the susceptible youth *in statu pupillari* in his intercourse with the college powers that be—prudish arrogance and stiffness on the one hand, presuming familiarity on the other. This truth the experience which Mr. Bulton had would have taught him, even if his own good taste had not pointed the lesson of itself: to the functions implied in the word tutor Mr. Bulton attached a very different and much wider significance than that which it generally involves. He considered that it was his duty to be a friend and counsellor as well as teacher and critic to the St. Ambrose undergraduates; that is, to such as showed themselves desirous of having either his friendship or his counsel. For Mr. Bulton was very far from being infested with that passion for creating proselytes and partisans which unfortunately usually results in widening the gulf between graduate and undergraduate. The lads who wished to see him he was glad to see, and they knew it. Contrast with such a man Mr. Cicala, a tutor of St. Ambrose also in my time, the junior of Mr. Bulton in age by fifteen years, in tact and insight by his whole lifetime. Cicala, however, felt that he had a mission. St. Ambrose was in

a corrupt state; there was too much dissipation, too many wines, too frequent card playing, and too little reading. Gradually it reached Cicala's ears that certain undergraduates of St. Ambrose were positively in the habit of holding loo and whist parties in each other's rooms every Sunday evening. Here the policy of non-intervention, the acute and virtuous college officer thought, clearly ought to end. Mr. Cicala had been tutor of St. Ambrose quite long enough to become thoroughly unpopular. The undergraduates disliked his attempts at familiarity with them, and objected to intrusions which were dictated by a spirit of patronage. Probably Mr. Cicala had observed something of this dislike, and was determined to show the junior members of St. Ambrose that if he could fawn he could also bite. It was quite necessary in this particular instance, he conceived, for the successful execution of his plan, that the gambling Sabbath-breakers should be detected in the very act. When, therefore, he had ascertained that the whole company of these irreverent youths was assembled, he determined to enter the door of the room in which they were assembled, astonish them by his appearance, denounce, and depart. He did so; but the lads were too wise to be terrified at the parting words of the academical detective, 'Gentlemen, I shall report you all to the Principal to-morrow.' Report them Cicala certainly did; but the Principal plainly told him that he had been guilty of a great error in policy. He summoned to him the host of the preceding evening, remonstrated with him on the impropriety of these Sunday *réunions*, and there the matter ended. The report immediately went round St. Ambrose that Cicala had been regularly snubbed and 'sat upon,' and the consequence was that the influence of the ardent reformer of St. Ambrose depravity became a dead letter from that day. Cicala happened to forget, if he ever knew, that the most effectual way of securing any moral hold or power over young men is by showing them first that you are a gentleman, and

that you intend to treat them as if they were too.

This last episode, and the mention of the two last characters, those of Mr. Bulton and Mr. Cicala, opens up a question which is one of the most important of all those connected with the social economy and management of Oxford and its colleges, the relation between tutor and pupil, or, to put it more generally, between don and undergraduate. For any one who has the slightest knowledge of the facts, it is impossible to say that it is satisfactory as it exists at present. It is not a healthy sign that the majority of young men who have just taken their degree should not have a single good word to say for their academic superiors as a class; that it should be as rare an exception to find an undergraduate praise a don as to find the don whom the undergraduate wishes to praise. Before I pass on to say a few words on the general subject, there is one single point which it is as well not to leave out of consideration. Curiously enough it may seem, the one main charge which you find the average undergraduate bringing against his academical superiors is that of a grasping cupidity. On what foundation does this charge rest? In the first place, it has become of late the custom for the authorities of some of the different colleges to open within their walls stores for grocery, and other such goods, in order, it is said, that the undergraduate committed to their care may not be compelled to submit to the extortions of unscrupulous tradesmen in the town. The profession is admirable: but what is the fact? Now it is positively the case that the articles which are sold within the college walls exceed in price, and do not equal in quality, those which are sold in the town. The surplus profit—where does that go? Well, where should it go, save into the capacious pockets of 'my college tutors?' In the second place, it is perhaps known that when an undergraduate takes possession of his college rooms he has to pay a certain valuation for the furniture already in them. During his resi-

dence he will in all probability add several articles to the stock of more or less value according not perhaps to his purse but to his taste. His twelfth term comes, and at the same time that he has to quit his college rooms he will also very likely be quitting Oxford and taking his degree. He may find it—and most likely will find it—impossible to do either of these things without paying off some few outstanding little debts. How is the money to be forthcoming? As for the paternal store, the demands already made on it have been enough, and more than enough. It does not seem an unnatural thing that he should look to his rooms' valuation as a source of income. He is giving them up, and returning them to their original proprietor, the college. With a view to concluding this negotiation, our undergraduate calls upon the bursar, that official suavely but decisively informing him, in answer to his request, that it is quite impossible, that it is altogether against the rules, and that before he can receive the sum for which he asks some incoming tenant must be found. What is to be done? It is June now, and it must be October before the new lodger can be found. Meanwhile, it is not improbably a matter of serious importance that the undergraduate should take his degree forthwith. Again, what is to be done? The long and short is that the lad is driven to the money-lender, who, for a trifling consideration of sixty per cent., lends him the required sum, and frees him, in a fashion, from this dire dilemma. Surely this state of things is no more desirable than it is really just. It cannot be defended by any legal argument whatever. It is not the undergraduate who selects the next lodger, but the college. On one tenant's quitting a set of chambers, all jurisdiction over them must revert to the college. As for the inexpediency and ungenerosity of the existing system, it is unnecessary to say a word on these.

To come back to the more general question—the ordinary social relations existing between the two

classes, the governing and the governed, undergraduates and dons. As for the difficulty of ruling and disciplining schoolboys who have just assumed the brevet rank of men, nothing need be said on that point. Something has already been remarked on what constitutes the real difficulty and creates the real mischief to which I now refer—the enormous prevalence of very young fellows and tutors at Oxford. The objection to them is not indeed their youth itself, but the inexperience, the want of tact, the deficiency of perception which that youth is generally found to bring with it. A sudden desire seizes these clumsy amateurs at management of treating a college as if it was a family, and developing a miscellaneous society of young men, whose only tie is local contiguity, into a brotherhood whose bond of union is consanguinity. 'We are all equals here,' that is the motto of these philanthropic reformers. A pleasant sentiment enough, but one which is utterly impracticable in reality, and which refuses to recognise facts as they are and as they must be. A college depends upon discipline; discipline implies authority; authority exacts obedience; and obedience involves inequality. Undergraduates are not ignorant enough or vain enough not to be aware of

this. Now it may be very well for tutors to cultivate amicable relations, not merely professionally, but socially, with their pupils: it is a good thing to find dons who cricket and dons who will row in the college eight. But if an attempt is made to push these generally amicable relations to the familiarity of equality, the whole scheme will break down. This is a plain fact which your young college tutor ignores. He wishes at once to take advantage of the superiority which his position as a don gives him, and to be received by the undergraduate as an equal friend. He is guilty of the impertinence of lounging at any hour into the rooms of lads with whom he has never had any personal acquaintance; and the impertinence is keenly felt, and naturally, as well as properly, resented. He endeavours to learn the secret doings of undergraduates by professions of brotherhood, and then utilizes what he has learnt for the assertion of superiority and the enforcement of discipline. There is reason to believe that the tone of Oxford is higher now than it has been for some years; if anything could lower it, it would be this mischievous and mistaken relation which the young 'fellow' endeavours to establish between undergraduate and don.

HOW ABOUT THE BIG NEEDLE?

DR. W. H. RUSSELL, in his recent 'Diary of the Visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to Egypt,' comments on the liability to destruction which awaits the marvellous works at Luxur, Karnac, and other parts of Thebes and Egypt, notwithstanding the almost imperishable character of the stone. He remarks that 'All nations have a common interest in the preservation of these magnificent monuments. They are in great danger. The Nile menaces them every year; and it would need very little to cause the fall of many a glorious pylon which a very little outlay could render safe.' Besides this, it

appears that travellers—tourists, who surely ought to know better—actually chip off bits from some of the wondrous sculptures, to take away as trophies. In reference to one of the famous Luxur obelisks, Dr. Russell adverts to the fact that we are doing nothing for that which was long ago given to us. 'The non-user of our right has led to doubts of its existence; and Colonel Stanton had a sharp controversy with Mourad Pacha, who denied that the obelisk belonged to us at all.'

Many of us here in England are quite ignorant of the fact that any of the Egyptian obelisks belong to

us, except a few small specimens at the British Museum. But, in truth, Egypt has supplied Europe with such things for a period very much like two thousand years past. The Romans were particularly active in obelisk-hunting. They began to do this in the time of Augustus, and continued it to the time of Constantine, re-erecting the obelisks in their famous city. Most of these obelisks have been thrown down or otherwise injured in the lapse of centuries; and in the process of restoration, new portions have been added to the old. The Lateran obelisk, as it is called, in front of the Lateran church at Rome, is the largest in that city, and probably the largest now existing anywhere; it was moved from Heliopolis to Alexandria by Constantine, and afterwards brought to Rome by his son Constantius. Altogether there are about a dozen Egyptian obelisks at Rome, now mostly known by the Italian names of the spots where they have been set up. There are, for instance, the Lateran obelisk, just mentioned, no less than a hundred and eighty-six feet high; the Vatican obelisk, eighty-three feet; the Flaminio del Popolo obelisk, seventy-eight feet; the Piazza di Monte Citorio obelisk, seventy-two feet; the Piazza Ravona obelisk, fifty-four feet; the Santa Maria Maggiore obelisk, forty-eight feet; the Quirinale di Monte Cavallo obelisk, forty-eight feet; and others of smaller height. These, like nearly all the other Egyptian and Theban obelisks, are monoliths, each one single stone. The more important among them, wrought three or four thousand years ago, were mostly of red Syene granite. They were not usually insulated monuments or single objects, but were regarded as accessories to palaces and temples, chiefly placed in pairs, one on either side of the propylon or principal entrance. For the most part their medium or middle diameter was equal to about one-tenth of the height, and the taper from bottom to top was slight and gradual. The apex, or pyramidion, was a sort of little pyramid. Generally the horizontal section was not a perfect

square, two of the sides being a little broader than the other two. Some of the faces were slightly convex; but usually each was flat, and engraved with hieroglyphics. The total number of such obelisks must have been very large, although those which are historically known are comparatively few. Two of great celebrity stood before the propylon of the vast Temple of Luxor at Thebes. The Pacha of Egypt, Mahomet Ali, presented one of them to England and one to France, forty years and more ago. What the French have done with theirs, we shall see presently; what we have done with ours, may be expressed by a single word—nothing!

How did the Romans bring such ponderous masses across the Mediterranean from Egypt to Italy; and, still more difficult, how did they bring them down or through Egypt to Alexandria? Pliny describes some of the arrangements connected with an obelisk a hundred and twenty feet high, erected at Alexandria by Ptolemæus Philadelphus. A canal was dug from the Nile to the place where the obelisk lay. Two boats were placed side by side, filled with pieces of stone having the aggregate weight of the obelisk; these pieces were in masses of one cubic foot each; so that the ratio between the quantity of matter in the obelisk and that held by the boats could be determined by a little calculation. The boats were laden to twice the weight of the obelisk, in order that they might pass under it: the two ends of the mighty monolith resting on the two banks of the canal. Then, as the pieces of stone were taken out one by one, the boats rose, until at last they supported the obelisk. They were finally towed down the canal, bearing their burden with them. So far Pliny's account is clear: but he tells us little or nothing of the tremendous task, performed ages before, of originally transporting such masses from the Syene quarries to Thebes and Heliopolis. It seems probable that the Egyptian obelisks were originally set up near the Nile; and a part of the labour resolved itself into trans-

port by means of rafts or boats. An account is given by Herodotus of the transport of a large block of granite to form a monolith temple. The block measured thirty-two feet long, twenty-one feet wide, and twelve feet high; its weight is estimated to have been not less than three hundred tons. The transport of this huge mass down the Nile, from Syene to the Delta, occupied two thousand men for three years. We know from other sources that the poor ill-used slave-labourers ('Retschid fellahs,' as one of our punsters has called them) were employed in vast numbers in pyramid-building and other heavy works; and there are traces here and there, among the bas-reliefs of the British Museum, of mechanical appliances used in such labour as this.

So far as Rome is concerned, we have a few accounts extant of the mode of bringing obelisks across the Mediterranean, and setting them up in new localities. When Constantius caused the Lateran obelisk (as it is now called) to be moved from Heliopolis to Alexandria, Constantine arranged for its further removal to Europe. A ship was built expressly for the purpose, manned by three hundred rowers; and on this ship the obelisk was floated. Laboriously did the immense cargo cross the Mediterranean and ascend the Tiber to Rome. The obelisk was moved on rollers through the Gate of Ostia to the Circus Maximus. Large beams of wood were then placed upright, and firmly embedded in the ground; strong ropes were passed from beam to beam in various directions, and by means of these (probably aided by pulleys) the small end of the obelisk was gradually raised until the proper vertical position was attained. Nor has modern Rome failed to do something in this way. What the emperors began in ancient days, the popes continued in more recent times. When, in the sixteenth century, many of the Egyptian obelisks were about to be re-erected at Rome, means had to be devised for moving such ponderous masses. No less than five hundred different plans are said to have been submitted by

architects and engineers to Pope Sixtus the Sixth, for raising the obelisk which now stands in front of St. Peter's; and Fontana is considered to have achieved wonders when, by the aid of many hundreds of men and horses, he fulfilled the allotted task.

Our French neighbours have shown themselves deficient neither in spirit nor in skill in this matter of Egyptian obelisks. When Mahomet Ali, as stated in a former paragraph, presented the French government with one of the two noble Luxor obelisks, measures were at once taken to utilise the gift. The government resolved to transport it to Paris, and to set it up in some place of honour. M. Lebas, a skilful engineer, was entrusted with the task; and severely indeed did it tax his energies and ingenuity. Let us see how he accomplished it. He built a vessel expressly for the purpose, and set off from Toulon to Alexandria in 1831, accompanied by a hundred and fifty workmen. Slowly and with great difficulty was this vessel navigated up the Nile, from Alexandria to Thebes. Eight hundred men were then employed for three months in making an inclined plane from the river's bank up to the place where the obelisk stood, a distance of about a quarter of a mile. Next ensued the tedious labour of lowering and moving this mass of granite, weighing little less than two hundred and fifty tons. The obelisk was encased in timber, to avert fracture and injury. Moved down to the river-side by an immense application of manual labour and mechanical contrivances, it was placed at length on board the vessel. The voyage down the Nile commenced, after waiting nine months for a sufficient depth of water. The river journey took three months, and Alexandria was reached towards the close of the year 1832. A whole year was then spent in a series of voyages, amid multiplied difficulties—first to Toulon, then to Cherbourg, then to Havre, and then up the Seine to Paris, where the weighty monolith arrived about Christmas, 1833. It was necessary to construct a pedestal of massive materials, on

which to set up the obelisk. Blocks of granite were brought from Brittany, the largest of which measured ten feet by ten, and sixteen feet in height. An inclined plane was then made, leading up from the banks of the Seine to the *Place de la Concorde*, where a platform of rough masonry was formed on a level with the top of the pedestal. The obelisk, placed on a timber stage or car, was dragged up this plane by means of ropes and capstans. One edge of its base having been brought to the edge of the pedestal, the raising of the smaller end was effected by ropes and pulleys attached to the heads of ten masts, five on each side. It was tough and tedious work; but at length, on the 25th of October, 1836, Lebas had the satisfaction of seeing the Luxor obelisk elevated into its place—after a series of operations which had engaged his almost undivided attention for the greater part of six years.

As to the companion obelisk at Luxor, that which was given to England at the time of the presentation to France of the one just noticed, nothing whatever has been done with it; there it is still, liable to injuries due to the rising of the Nile, and to the discreditable picking and stealing on the part of tourists.

But there is another obelisk which has, for various reasons, excited much more interest in England. Is there any reasonable chance that we shall ever see the far-famed Cleopatra's Needle in England?—that the Benchers of the Temple, for instance, will have it in their pleasant and chrysanthemum-bedecked garden; that the pedestrians on the Thames Embankment will see it before them, or beside them, as they walk along? that it will be a credit to us here in England, instead of a disgrace to us in Egypt? Many readers of this magazine will be surprised at such a question, not having heard of so novel a transfer from one locality to another; but the suggestion has really been made, and supported by many persons who have a right to an opinion on the subject. Other querists may ask—What is this Cleopatra's Needle?

where is it? who made it? what had Cleopatra to do with it? is it anything like a needle? how did we come to possess it? who gave it to us, and when? and if it is ours, why is it not now in some port or other of Queen Victoria's dominions? Well, this said Cleopatra's Needle is supposed to have been one of four monolith obelisks which Sesotris set up at Heliopolis, and of which two were removed from that place to Alexandria. One was transported to Italy by the Romans; the second and third need not be particularly mentioned here; while the fourth is known as Cleopatra's Needle—the origin of which designation we cannot explain. This so-called needle now lies prostrate in sand and dust near Alexandria. It is about sixty-three feet long by eight feet square at the base. It consists of one single magnificent block of porphyry; and as there are no porphyry quarries nearer than six hundred miles from Heliopolis, Sesotris (if he be the man) must have adopted some formidable means of transporting such a mass.

Now this Cleopatra's Needle is ours—unless Dr. Russell's remark about 'non-user' applies to this as well as to the obelisk at Luxor. Some persons say that it was ours by right of war, so far back as 1801, when the British defeated the French in Egypt. The English officers ranked it among the trophies gained from the French, without much regard to the disputed rights of the Pacha against the Sultan, or of the French against both. Curious bits of information on this subject have been made public within the last two or three years. There are, it is understood, two aged British officers still living who were concerned in the operations in Egypt nearly seventy years ago. One of these is the veteran Field-Marshal Sir John Fox Burgoyne; and he has made public some of his reminiscences on this matter. He says: 'After the French were expelled, Major-General Lord Cavan was left in command, and took a great interest in the project for removing to England the prostrate obelisk. I think it was meant to be done by

subscription, which failed; but the arrangement went so far that a transport was selected for its conveyance, and the manner of its stowage defined—a somewhat delicate operation with such an enormous single block. A temporary timber jetty, to the end of which the ship could lie, was constructed from the shore close to the monument—when the whole was interrupted for want of funds.' This fine old soldier, certainly one of the patriarchs of the army, has called to mind a *jeu d'esprit* which was composed by one of the officers at the time. It consisted of a picture representing Lord Cavan carrying off Cleopatra's Needle, Pompey's Pillar, and a couple of pyramids; the Needle under one arm, the other monuments in a sort of carpenter's basket; and underneath were some verses, of which two ran thus—

'How you thus, Atlas-like, sustain
Such pond'rous weights, nor yet complain
Of toll attendant on your station;
And how, in your gigantic eyes,
Vast mountains shrink to molehill size—
I note, my lord, with admiration.

'The Needle on th' Egyptian shore,
Beheld by you, appears no more
Than a small bodkin stuck through paper;
And Pompey's Pillar, I declare,
I wish your lordship had a pair;
'Twould serve you just to hold a taper.'

Nearly thirty years after those stirring Bonapartean days in Egypt, Cleopatra's Needle was more formally presented to us by the (then) Pacha. We thanked him, but did nothing. In 1847, Major-General Delamotte reported that the Needle was still in good preservation, except a little clipping at the edges. About the same period, the late Prince Consort wrote a letter on the subject of bringing the obelisk to England, stating how willing he would be to aid in some such operation. In 1849, Mr. John Macgregor, who now 'paddles his own canoe' on so many seas, lakes, and rivers, visited Egypt, and found the Needle about one-third buried in the sand, the remaining two-thirds being still visible. Two years afterwards, several British officers who had been engaged in the Egyptian expedition just half a century before (and of whom, as

we have just said, only two are now left), memorialised Lord John Russell on the subject of bringing the obelisk to England; but nothing definite seems to have resulted from this application. Another period of eleven years passed, and then, in 1862, when there was a plan broached for setting up some kind of monolith obelisk in Hyde Park, on the site of the first Great Exhibition Crystal Palace, some advisers recommended Cleopatra's Needle for appropriation in this way; but no one was prepared with a plan for conveying such an unwieldy mass from the banks of the Thames through public streets to Hyde Park. Since that year, Sir Charles Trevelyan, on visiting Egypt, found only one angle of the base of the obelisk visible above the sand—from which angle the *donkey boys* had knocked off strips for visitors! (Those tourists again!) Still more recently, Mr. Macgregor saw Cleopatra's Needle again in the early part of 1869; or rather, he did not see it; for he found it entirely covered up in a kind of stoneyard. He says: 'In a very few years we may have to dig shafts, like those I have been in at Jerusalem—to see, where a gift stone is, second to none in Egypt for interest, and to few in grandeur and dignity.'

There are now again proposals for bringing this grand monolith to England—threading our great Needle in such a way that it will not snap the thread. The energetic and whimsical captain, mate, cook, steward, and cabin-boy of the canoe 'Rob Roy' says: 'If I could help at all in bringing this Alexandrian stone to London, it would be a real pleasure, even if only to remove a stigma from our nation; for we are often and justly blamed in Egypt because we spend thousands in digging up things all over the globe, but will not spend hundreds to bring this one home, or even to prevent it from being lost for ever.' Mr. Macgregor probably does not strictly mean that 'hundreds' of pounds would suffice to do it; but he is quite right in thinking that we could easily master the difficulty if we chose. If the Trafalgar Square

lions are worth 12,000*l.*, how much is Cleopatra's Needle worth? This is a question which we should really like somebody to solve. In his latest canoe-book, 'The Rob Roy on the Jordan,' Mr. Macgregor again adverts to this subject. When marvelling at some of the ruins near Zoan, in the Delta, he exclaims: 'Think of the labour of transporting hither these stones, each many hundreds of tons in weight, from the Upper Nile, whence several of them *must* have come; and yet we Englishmen have left the splendid obelisk, Cleopatra's Needle, close by the sea at Alexandria for fifty years, though it belongs to England, and would grace our finest site in London. In 1849 the neglected gift was only half buried; but in 1869 it was so completely hidden that not even the owner of the workshop where it lies could point out to me the exact spot of its sandy grave!' The money difficulty we could soon get over, if we liked; and as for the engineering difficulty, there would be less in bringing an obelisk from Alexandria to London, than from Luxor to Paris, seeing that the tedious navigation of the Nile would be almost wholly avoided, and that the Thames is better fitted for navigation than the narrow and tortuous Seine. From time to time, during past years, schemes have been put forth for bringing home Cleopatra's Needle. One elaborate plan involved the building of a dry dock close to

the spot where the obelisk now lies; the formation in this dock of a solid mass of timber, large enough to sustain the obelisk, and stout enough to float it; the hauling of the obelisk on this raft; the enclosing it with enormous timbers on every side; the construction upon it of cabins and other requirements for a sailing-ship; the excavating of a canal from the dry dock to the Nile; the filling of the dock and the canal with water; the floating of the large mass; and the navigating of it to England. But there is plenty of brain-power at hand. Tell our Fowlers or Batemans, our Cubitts or Hawkshaws, that all reasonable cash for the work would be forthcoming, and any one of them could devise an effective plan for bringing this grand Egyptian trophy to the metropolis. And why should it not be placed in the Temple Gardens, as has been proposed? There would not be a bit of land-carriage from end to end of the journey. The arches of the five bridges below that spot are now of ample span enough to permit the Needle to pass through them. The chimney-shaft of Messrs. Smith's distillery at Pimlico is said to have been modelled on the proportions of Cleopatra's Needle: if this be so, we may judge how grand an appearance the *real* Needle would present at the proposed locality. A penny ride in a Thames steamer would then give us a very pleasant pennyworth of Egypt.

POPPIES IN THE CORN;

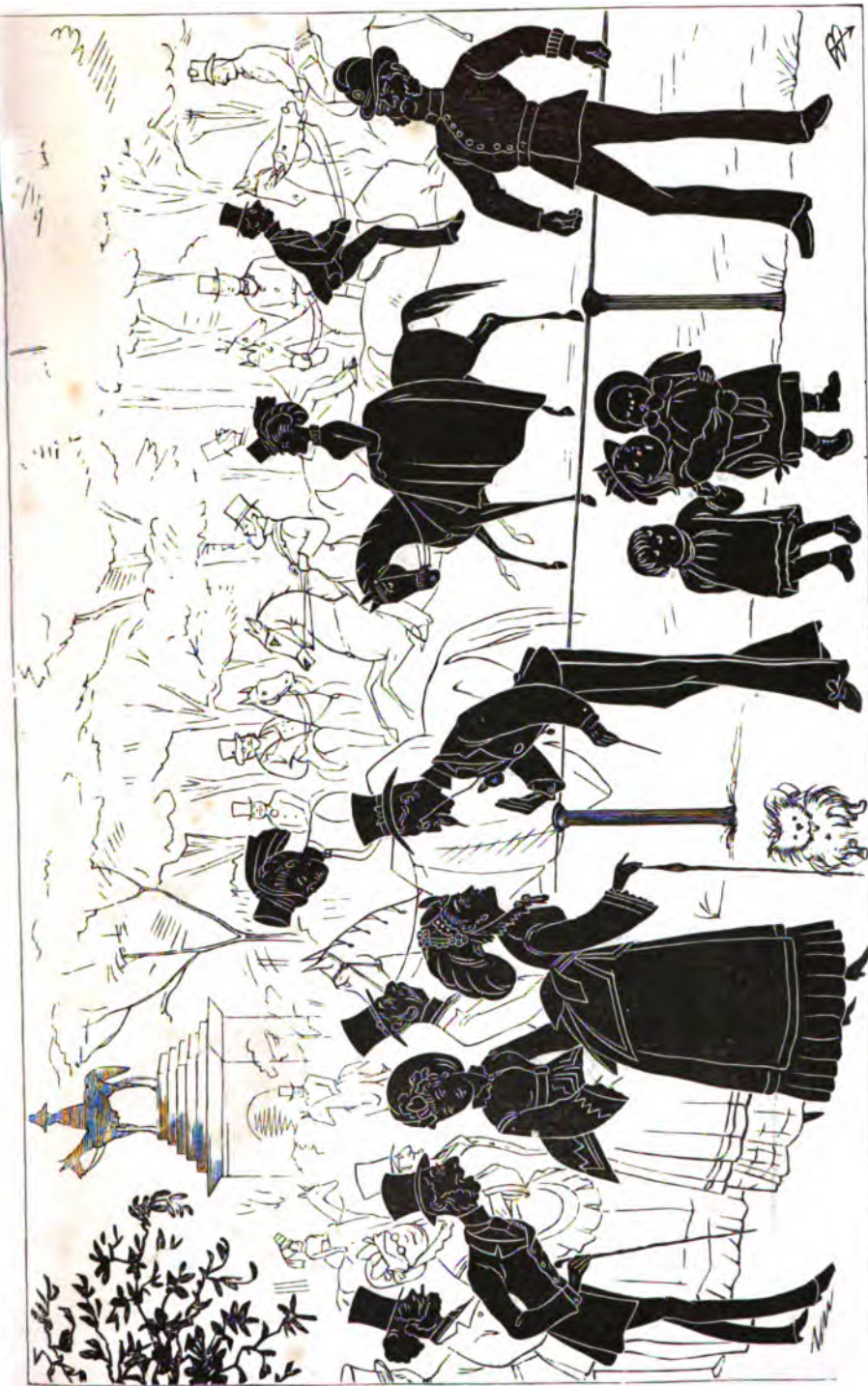
OR, GLAD HOURS IN THE GRAVE YEARS.—No. XI.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE,' &c.

COLLEGE FRIENDS.

COLLEGE friends. Yes, I must people the old walls, and not leave the beautiful city in the loneliness of Vacation days; a shell without the mollusk. I have called up the venerable buildings, the noble streets, the Towers and Spires. I have summoned before memory the scenery; but this would seem

cold and bald (however lovely) without the persons of the drama. The short drama; a piece in three acts: three years, and three examinations; and then the curtain falls, let us hope, not without some moderate applause. Applause at least from the home circle, and the choice band of friends: there is, for them,



IN THE HEIGHT OF FASHION.—A SKETCH IN JET AT HYDE PARK CORNER.

Drawn by William Brunton.



W. & M. L.

Alfred Thompson

MY PORTRAIT AT



THE ACADEMY



IN APRIL.

Sketched by Horace Stanton.

always something to praise; you obtained an honorary Fourth; or the examiner thanked you;—or looked as though he would have liked to thank you, had he not felt bashful. Applause, where this is anyhow possible: sometimes, indeed, a sad, rebuking silence; sometimes (ah, rarely, from the kind home-hearts, at least!) hissing, execration.

How delightful, however, to leave the stage as a 'well-graced actor.' 'Not void of righteous self-applause,' no doubt. But still more blessed in the proud and happy look of the father, at the return home—the father that had so faithfully and self-denyingly pinched and saved to send his bonny boy into the world well equipped for the battle of life; to send him out a gentleman and a scholar, with the chance (until our Universities have been *liberalised* down to infidelity) of being an intelligent Churchman too. And now his wistful longings, lookings, expectings, have not been disappointed. Heartily could he enjoy the minor triumph of seeing him smiting Cambridge to leg and to off, and far away beside frantic long-on, at Lord's, or of seeing him stand on the shore, flushed with toil and triumph, stalwart, brave, and lithe, and fit to row another mile yet, when the gallant light-blue had just rowed by, fagged and dejected. Heartily might the appreciative father enter into such excoitements as these, seeing that they were but preludes to that great day when trembling hands were opening a letter, on which 'All right!' had been thoughtfully written, and which announced that the young fellow had been placed in the First Class. Oh, the greeting when he came home, with another first added to that—a double first-class man!

No doubt it was delightful, that expected moment of the coming out of the list; that first exhilaration, that writing off the good news just in time for post; those congratulations of tutors, and the cheers of the fellows at the farewell supper. No doubt it was a day to be remembered all through life, that day of the B.A. degree; the entering the

Schools clad in the wisp of gown which Dons insist on undergraduates wearing in its undeveloped scantiness (chiefly, it seems to me, after careful research, because the men object to the garment)—the entering the Schools, I say, thus habited, and, after a brief ceremony, emerging to surrender to the obsequious scout the tattered fragment which was the badge of the undergraduate, and then to stalk proudly forth into the Oxford streets robed in the full and flowing garb of the Bachelor. Was not this a delightful day? Better far than that forlorn Master's Degree, over two years after, when all the old faces are away, and never a welcome found in so much as one of the old rooms. There are, you see, for the Bachelor, still most of the old band; and hearty sympathies, and stalwart pats on the back, and vehement bravoes are all at his beck and call. Was not that, then, a delightful day, when he became a Graduate of Oxford; when he could look back upon Examinations, small moderate, and great, as henceforth things of the past; when the B.A. importance was yet a new thing; and all the laurels of the crown fresh and unfaded; and the young success a delight never failing, a thing deliciously to call to mind at first waking in the morning, and at certain luxuriously complacent moments of meditation during the day?

Delightful the sweets of success, while the Term yet lasted, and among the band of University friends. But not in the least comparable to the delight of the home greeting. No, no. The anticipation, the delicious musing during that swift hour's speeding from Reading to London; the arrival, with fluttered heart;—the welcome. Sisters proud and appreciative; brothers admiring and vociferous; the dewy gleam in the father's eye, his wring of the hand, with but little said. Only, in the evening, while the cosy party are gathered about the fire, and there has been a few minutes' reflective silence, a simple speech that touches the young man's heart with its pathetic revelation of the depth of the

father's grateful pride, '*I wish dear *** was here.*' But the mother never lived to see her first-born, her darling, even into his teens. Does she look on? Can she know? Does she uttered wish, that betrays the void in the father's heart, in this hour of his joy, bring any glow of gladness to her spirit, because she may perceive that the remembrance of her, the want of her, still tarry upon the earth?

However these things be, there is no doubt about the sweetness of this hour to the hero of the evening. Is it not well repaid, the self-denial (it *was*, often, stern self-denial), the hard work, which have resulted in so much happiness, such joy given and received? Ah, he might have had more of enjoyment (falsely so called) had he frittered away his University career in amusement and extravagance; and he might have escaped reproach on his return, after the bare degree, hardly got at last—he might have escaped reproach from the sad-thoughted father. But now were not any pains worth while, to have been the cause of that quiet, thankful joy, too deep for many words, which lights up that father's face, as he meditatively thrums on the table, looking absorbedly into the glow and dance of the Christmas fire? Ah, if young men would think! But they very often will not. How many are even now so living their short University life that in the years to come, often, often, a shade will come over the face at the remembrance of it, and often the vain and sorrowful wish rise from the heart near to the lips, 'Ah, how I wish that I had those grand opportunities again!'

It is, to a tender, thoughtful heart, even pathetic to watch for long and meditate upon an assemblage of the young fellows; fair, open faces, fresh young cheeks, the glow of health unquenched, smooth brows, vigorous limbs; and minds in tune with the health and young life of the body. Richly endowed with that portion of goods which fell to them from the Father's store, but, in too many cases, not contented to enjoy it under His wise and kind direction: no, they must go out and

away from that, and squander them in the vain world. Health and joyousness and light heart and innocent mind and energy and fire and impulse and vigour: soon all spent, and nought to show for the spending. Then the famine—then the famine! And, *perhaps*, the return after all. But, ah, how much better to have kept at home, and to have saved this harm and loss! Not an utter wreck; that is much; but we had rather have seen the brave vessel sailing into port, not indeed spared by storms and hard weather, but having nobly over-ridden them; a veteran, but not a dismasted hull, only just towed in from destruction.

But I may end these meditations with some verses which seem to the point. Verses written by this humble pen, for noble music, to which they were married by a college friend. They who please may hear them sung, next May the 10th, in St. James's Hall, as a chorale, in a noble Oratorio which will on that day be first performed for a noble cause. The name of the Oratorio being, 'The Return of the Prodigal.' The words are those of a chorus of Angels.

'Father, scorned and slighted,
Dost Thou see Thy child?
Life's fair promise blighted
Once that gaily smiled.
Hope and strength and gladness
Spent, all spent and gone,
Dull despair and madness
Claim him for their own.

'All the joy and laughter
Spent and hushed and dead;
All the deep peace after,
Spent:—for ever fled!
Youth's quick faith and pleasure,
Energy and glow,
All that first rich treasure
Spent:—and nought to show!

'We, Thy sons, Thine Angels,
We, the elder Host,
We would sing evangels
To the lone and lost;
We, Thy children, Father!
Safe within Thy Home;
Therefore yearn the rather
Over those that roam.

'Lo! a hunger ever
Gnaweth at his soul;
Earthly banquets never
Can its want control;

Ah, that want, God-given
Child of the Divine!
Asks the Bread of Heaven,—
Not the food of swine.

Father, art Thou calling,
Calling home the lost?
Is Thy sunshine falling
On the winter-frost?
Father, look upon him,
Wandering and beguiled;
Thou hast not foregone him,
Still is he Thy child!

'Father! There is silence,
Deep and still and dread;
Earnest, eager silence,
Till the word be said:
SAVED! He is forgiven!—
Million harps should raise,
Pealing through high Heaven,
Ecstasies of praise!'

College friends. Ay, (this poem-let comes in *apropos* of my theme. How little I knew, when in my own Freshman's Term I was horrified by the news that the freshman who had taken the next rooms to mine was expecting the arrival of a piano; how little I knew the delights in store for me! With a cold shudder I anticipated the slow torture of 'scales,' or of 'exercises,' or the still more excruciating anguish of the continual murder of sweet or grand music. But Mendelssohn's and Beethoven's exquisite masterpieces, rendered by subtlest hands, and a kindred and fully appreciative mind, were, instead, to be my happy portion. Nor were pieces of his own composing, I soon found, unworthy even to alternate with these creations. Beethoven's 'Sonata Pathétique,' and that duet between the bass and treble, one of the 'Songs without Words,' were the first dispellers of my fears concerning that piano. How I learned to love them! Nor has my appreciation the least chilled, nor would, did I hear them every night of my life. How perfect that love-poem of Mendelssohn's! How the earnest notes express the strength and sweetness and depth of man's character, answering gravely to the trusting, gentle, tender pleading of the soft woman-treble. But none, to my mind, ever renders and interprets Mendelssohn as did that college friend of mine, save that the

gentle empress of my own piano has lovingly indulged me by careful study of the—trick would be quite the wrong word—manner, then, of the setting forth the master's music. Rather, however, this consummate playing was simply the catching the maker's meaning in his work.

After a hard day's reading in the maturer Oxford life, just when he fancied my wearied head was laid on the pillow, he (knowing my fancy) would often go to the piano, and soothe my tired senses, and summon rest to my busy mind, and exorcise dark fears concerning the next examination, and banish gnawing crowds of irregular verbs, or perplexing syllogisms, or knotty passages, or tiresome, slippery dates, or subtleties of philosophy, as the case might be. They would lull their weary solicitude, at the potent spell, and I could sink to sleep in an atmosphere of delicious sounds that, as with angel-wings, fanned and cooled my hot and tired brain.

His room and mine are of the old haunts among which memory best loves to linger; and I have but to shut my eyes, and behold, I am again in that familiar room, an honoured and indulged guest, leaning back in his easy-chair. And he sits with his grave face towards the piano, and all the attendant spirits that wait at his beck and obey his summons are making the hour delicious, and dispelling care and anxiety.

College friends. Thus harmonious are my reminiscences of one of them. But, at the word, a cluster of them starts out bright in memory's sky. There is Barton, thin and pale, appreciative of poetry, delighted, on his first call, at seeing Tennyson on my shelves. He comes in and takes his place often, of a morning, on my reclining chair, while I am finishing my breakfast. I have safely landed my egg out of the saucepan, boiled, or (I soared so far) poached on a piece of toast; my tea is made; a friendly book perched on its desk by my plate; I have come in from chapel, and there is, this morning, no lecture for me. Then arrives the well-known tap at the door, the

familiar sociable face; the cosy breakfast chat. Oxford talks seem like no other talks, as Oxford friends are like no other friends. Life seems so to be a thing outspread before us, at that time; we are standing on the brink for the plunge into the buffeting waters, but they do not seem to us, as we stand impatient, exultant there, other than smooth and glittering, or if they do, we glory in the prospect of battling with their fury. All before us; untried, new, exciting; (to change our simile), the time—

'When, wide in soul and bold of tongue,
Among the tents we paused and sung.
The distant battle flashed and rung.

'We sung the joyful psalm clear,
And sitting, burnished without fear
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

'Waiting to strive a happy strife,
To war with falsehood to the knife,
And not to lose the good of life.'

Yes, all lay before us: if a strife, a *happy* strife; not the weary sobbing contest with dogged Evil, the dreadful Inkerman nights and days which grim experience brought to us. So we chatted, so we hoped. Both also, of course, in love: his love dawning, and he delighting to dwell upon the sweet present, the ecstatic Future. Ah! it is but last year that he buried dear wife and only child, and started afresh with a new loneliness of life; a loneliness perceived now, as it had not been before:

'For a sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering happier things.'

Then, again, both looking forward to taking Holy Orders. And how bright the prospect! How dear, how delicious the thought of that noblest of work! How wise we would be; how zealous; what deep Divines; what earnest Parish Priests! There would, we knew of course, be obstacles, difficulties,—nay, if not, what sphere for noble work?—for tact, for zeal, for unconquerable patient love? But a bright golden haze mellowed with a tender unreality, all that uncertain, dimly-seen future at which we used to gaze so cheerily, so longingly, in those old Oxford days, in those old Oxford rooms. Ah, how different real war-

fare from anticipated warfare! How different real deeds from pictured deeds! How different experience from romance! Yet, although the golden haze soon lifted from the fields when we entered them and encamped in them, which of us would, had we our choice to make again, for even one half moment reconsider it? Which of us would not, in sadness, reach out our hands even yet more eagerly, for that which we grasped in the joyousness of hopeful inexperience?

Lately, at dinner with a friend, I heard the remark made that no one ought to take Holy Orders unless his father or friends were certain to be able to procure him a 'Living' in due time. Now I hate the word, *Living*; it is a grovelling name for such a charge as is that of a Cure of souls. I created a smile by the warmth with which I broke in, declaring that if I knew at the outset that my only boy would remain all his life a Curate with 80*l.* a year, I would choose that life for him before the proudest other position the world had to offer. And so I would. We clergymen are to blame for seeming to talk and think so much of 'Preferment' (hateful word!). It seems too hideous to suppose that reticence, in times and crises that need outspoken speech, can ever have anything to do with the thought and expectation of this. That mouths watering for bishoprics or deaneries can thus be prevented from pealing forth trumpet utterances that would be *imprudent*. Yet the fear cannot be banished that thus the case sometimes is. And what must the laity think? Are the sneers about the loaves and fishes quite and always undeserved? Oh, vile and abject condition of things! Oh for a few more Denison and Burgon spirits! The 'cold shade' under which they may lie shall be lifted one day. Then shall they *shine forth as the sun*.

But Barton has finished his weed (he sometimes indulged in that bad habit, not only of smoking, but of smoking in the morning), and I my breakfast. So I start out of the reverie into which I fell while he

was studying some examination-papers for 'Mods' (which agreeable employment loomed in the horizon;) and leave Thomas to clear my table for work. O those examination-papers! does not a thrill come over us as we recall our anxious perusal of them, and markings of this point and that, which had been evidently intended to 'stump' the hapless victims of their extinct fury? And a cold shudder ran down the back, as we felt that fresh ones, yet unborn, and unguessed at, lurked in the minds of examiners, to be, one dreadful day, set face to face with ourselves! What a pensive moment is that in which, in after-life, we take out those magic slips of paper, the four 'Testamurs.' What memories of confident or anxious waiting; of the joyous step of the friend coming into our room with them! What a pleasant warmth down the back, and kindly self-complacency in the heart, as we meet the congratulations of 'the men in Hall! What a bright glow seems to light the streets and buildings as we walk out into them;—'the very Schools appear to smile.' But how long ago now since all that was over!

Pass we on, however, to other College friends. One, a Professor now at Oxford; then, a double First-class man of our Hall; a pride for us and for him. Not at first a College friend: too much my Senior when I came; too great a man. But he has instituted a Debating society to be held in our dining-hall, and he is to open it with a debate on 'Tennyson, whether or no he be worthy the name of a true Poet?'

Barton and I are, need I say? roused men at this. What though he be a Graduate who leads the attack, and we but junior men? If no worthier champion arise, ourselves shall stand in the gap. And in truth there was little doubt that we should have to do so, for, sooth to say, few were the students and appreciators of the great poet in our community at that time; and, say what we would, we well knew that the dead-weight of our opponents' opinion would probably prevail to turn the scale against our arguments. Still, we would 'keep the

bridge' against whatever odds. Barton should lead, and I should second the defence.

The evening came: the attack was made; the poetry itself, and the sentiment of the poetry furiously assailed. Barton replied at great length, interspersing his speech with many quotations, but these running much upon the subject of love, to which weakness or strength the speaker was accredited with a strong bias, more merriment was provoked than perhaps was well for the weighing of grave argument. Which, however, was borne with imperturbable good-humour, and much applause followed the sitting down of the Tennysonian champion. The debate was adjourned, on the motion of another of the assailants. I was to reply to him.

One's first speech in public!—especially to an Oxford public!—it must be owned to be an anxious matter. Should I stick? Should I break down? For one can have no possible idea of whether the faculty of fluent public speech is in any degree possessed until a trial has been made. And many will sympathise in the solicitude with which I looked forward to what was to be my maiden effort.

Behold, however, the Hall filled with a goodly gathering; even a Master of Arts there—to undergraduates, a kind of superior being; one of those who 'Live and lie reclined on the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind; for they lie beside their nectar, and the clouds are lightly curled.' Well; one of them was of the audience. The adjourner of the debate made a speech *apropos* of nothing; and, upon his sitting down, I found that the inevitable moment had come for me to make my first appearance as a debater. Perhaps the less said about it the soonest mended. Enough to say that, certain kind applause helping me on, I did not, at least, stick fast, or break down. I remember to this day (our earliest successes or, at least, *non-failures*, have a sweetness about them which no after, even if really great, success can command), I remember to this day the gratification with which the applause filled my heart, when I

had sat down, after some such magnificent peroration as this—

‘To those who have read this poet, and yet love him not;—who have, nevertheless, like my opponent, proved themselves to be of first-class—nay, of *Double First-class*—ability’ (here the applause was vociferous), ‘to these I can only express my regret that they and I should be on opposite sides in this debate.

‘To those who are non-appreciative because they have not read Tennyson—and this is a large class—I will quote the words of the Editors of Shakespeare: “Read him, therefore; and again, and again; and if then you do not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him.”

‘To those—and I am sure there are none here—who simply have not the power to appreciate true poetry, and who bay, like dogs, at the sound of sweet music, I can only say, in the words of the mighty poet himself, “Let them rave!”

Poor claptrap, of course; but many a speech more applauded than was my humble maiden effort is even composed of the same material. And have I ever forgotten the modicum of applause then accorded? or the compliment of my senior foe, upon the ‘skill and power of mind’ which I had displayed? or his coming to me next morning to urge me to read for Honours instead of the modest Pass to which alone I aspired? Pshaw! this seems absurd, egoistic; but it is not so. I write to the public, and merely as one of the public. For have we not all had our first successes (however crude), and our first glow at them, never equalled, I say, by the more sober triumphs of maturer years? Are not the achievements, the disappointments, of youth far more keenly, if less deeply and lastingly felt, than those of the Summer or waning Autumn of life?

‘*Ἄλὲν ἀριστεύειν, καὶ ὑπερῶν ἐμμεναὶ ἔλλων*’

we learn in truth that there is something nobler than this, as life’s sad earnest sifts us. But the desire to excel, to win praise, in some degree to rise to notice among our equals—this is the natural desire of the heart

in youth. And a slight success, a little wind of applause, is unspeakably dear to us, when neither we nor the world yet know of what we are made, nor whether or no there be in us any sterling stuff.

So, to this very day, there is a pleasure in recalling that evening of first debate, and this notwithstanding the sad fact that weighted down, as I contended, by the name of a double first-class man, the majority went against us! Still, however, the Poet sits on his throne, and added laurels, since that day, have graced his kingly brow. And my opponent has gained a professorial chair, and is the writer of that admirable book, ‘Constitutional Progress,’ so useful a *résumé* of the history of the constitution of this great country; and this from a staunch Church point of view. And for myself, I sit contented in the study in my country curacy, not otherwise known to fame than as the modest author of ‘The Harvest of a Quiet Eye.’

Well, reminiscences of College friends must take, of necessity, rather a personal complexion. Let me pass on to another friend—another episode in the pleasant three years.

A rare specimen of humanity was Edgar Atheling, with a peculiar genius for getting into, and out of, rows with proctors, examiners, whom not. He it was who first of all entered my rooms, on the evening of my arrival as a Freshman, and as he often appealingly reminded me afterwards, ‘lent me a candle the first night.’ He was in residence one term before myself. When I came up I soon heard of him, not, however, as I have shewn just now, before I saw him. But accounts reached me of how, failing in his endeavour to gain permission to remove the bars from outside his window, he had covered them with gilding; how he had defied the foolish conventionalities of the University by lounging at the gate of the Quad., in a green dressing-gown, scarlet fez cap, and slippers, and with a long clay pipe in his mouth; and this in the hours before two, when the rules of the University require the academic dress. This was on the second

morning of his residence. One of the Tutors (unknown to him) coming up, and accosting him with considerable amaze, was received with a stiff bow, and the remark, 'You have the advantage of me, sir. I do not remember to have been introduced to you.' 'Never mind that, Mr. Atheling,' the Tutor somewhat warmly rejoined. 'You will know me well enough some day. In the meantime, I would strongly advise you to confine that mountebank costume to your staircase before the Vice-President comes to his rooms.'

'You see,' remarked Atheling afterwards, to a friend, 'there was sound sense in the advice, though couched in unbecoming language. Atrocious costume, indeed! It was lovely! It was unique! But then the poor fellow hadn't the least eye for colour, and that's his misfortune, you know, not his fault.'

Well, experience mingled some slight elements of gravity with his merriment, as the flying Terms sped by, and the silver hair of the senior man began to streak the first gold and brown of the freshman's head. Still his ideas were remarkable always for their originality of conception, and boldness of execution.

Let me recur to one of them. He announced to me, one winter evening, the idea, matured as soon as entertained, that had entered his head; viz., of giving a grand amateur concert in his rooms—a concert to which ladies, and the Vice-Principal himself, with his wife and daughters, were to be invited. I laughed at the notion; however, he was in earnest about it, and manfully carried it through. I prophesied that the Vice would resent the being asked to such an affair. But assurance prevailed, where diffidence would have held back, and my friend informed me triumphantly that the 'Vice' and his family were coming; also that he had received a letter from the belle of Oxford, accepting his invitation.

Well, all was excitement and preparation for a long time beforehand. Glees, madrigals, solos, quartetts, overtures, were the order of the next three weeks. Great preparations were made in the rooms, and on the night the big college-gates

were thrown open, and the host, all a fever of excitement, was watching the carriages, one after one, rolling in. The concert itself went off, I suppose, much as other such concerts do; the performers (mostly novices at this kind of thing) trying vainly to look and sing at their ease. The men, those, at least, of the so-called 'fast' set, seeming to be altogether out of their element, and sadly terrified at the ladies. Indeed I was amused at the transformation that had come over the usual state of things there. Here were the rickety, rich fellows, considered, by themselves, as the *élite* of the community, awkward, shy, and bashful in the presence of ladies: noisy enough in their own set, they appeared tongue-tied and exceedingly ill at ease on this occasion. But the quiet men, some of them with the need for very careful living, yet *gentlemen*, came out into prominence, and enjoyed the genial change of ladies' society in Oxford—a rare occurrence there—while those were herding together in a helpless, dumb condition, sickly-looking, white-tied, black-coated, and miserable.

All, however, passed off well, and compliment after compliment was showered upon the (for a wonder) bashful host, and presently the last carriage rolled away. Then, as by a spell, the incubus was taken off my 'fast' men, and from speechless they became uproarious. I could not help being secretly tickled to see the evident relief that they felt at being left once more heroes of their own society.

Many of them, unlike our host, had no pretensions to the birth or breeding of gentlemen. Rich and vulgar, they commanded a certain standing in their own set; but they formed principally a set among themselves, and removed from that gathering they were fish out of water.

What University man does not know the set of which I am thinking? men whose wit is coarseness and vulgarity, whose repartees are rudeness, whose great forte is to sing an evil song, to 'chaff a cad' (who, by the way, often gets the better of the match), to spend money lavishly for admiration, often, how-

ever (as Aristotle notices of such spendthrifts), marrying their profuseness by some interspersed of meanness and out-of-place frugality—men who neither really enjoy nor use Oxford life, who neither are educated by its studies nor by its society.

For oh, what an education there is, not only in the studies but in the society of a University, if rightly sought and employed! I have known men, reading men, shut themselves up in their rooms, refuse every, even the most innocent, invitations to any genial festivities, decline to subscribe to pleasures, however harmless and healthful—boating, cricket, with which they will have nothing to do; and all this with the best intention—with the intention of economy—with the intention of making the most of the Oxford life. As if the poor sovereign or two given towards such healthful and innocent amusements would not have been well spent in procuring the influence for good over lighter-hearted youths, who would have said, 'Well, if so and so won't join us he isn't at least one of the shabby lot, one of the fellows who think all that is pleasant is wrong. We can respect his self-denial, his economy, although we can't or needn't share in it.'

Then, though the study-element is certainly a considerable part of the Oxford education, it is by no means the only part; I had almost said, by no means the principal part. The genial life of free society, yet with its own proper and even strict etiquette; the mixing on equal terms with men of many circumstances and many minds; the interchange of free opinions, and the being among equals in age and standing; the responsible

relation then entered upon of host and guest—all these things do, undoubtedly, train a man to fill easily and gracefully his position in the society of after-life. His over-weeningness is rubbed down, his over-bashfulness rubbed off. He gets a certain self-possession without self-conceit, which hardly can be attained so well by any other way than by a university career well and honourably and wisely spent. He is educated, I repeat, as much by the society as by the study of the University. Thus much for the benefit of Oxford acquaintances even, we would not speak, in this utilitarian manner, of college friends.

For these are to be more warmly, more earnestly spoken of. What friends, not of our very kindred, are comparable to them? Dear old band, scattered now hither and thither, over the wide world; what a bond of union still joins every one of us; and how we should meet, with a gladness, a kindliness not elsewhere attainable, if at any time we might be gathered, as in those old days, in sweet society again! The string is cut, and the beads have run this way and that. Yet how naturally will all group together again, how readily run into one circle, if at any time they might be strung once more, all as they were (except for years of changes, but not changes to their love), upon the old dark-blue string!

Hence half the delight of the matches at Lord's and on the river, between the rival Universities. We meet them again, one by one; and the face brightens, and the eyes sparkle, and hand almost grows to hand, as we come suddenly, amid the crowd of strangers, upon some dear old College Friend.

A ROMANCE OF SOUTH KENSINGTON.

'CHARLIE,' said Frank Egerton, 'I think I should like to get married.'

'Don't be foolish,' said Mr. Davenport. 'Remember "Punch's" advice to people about to marry, Don't.'

'There's not much else to be done,' said Egerton. 'Ever since this big bit of money fell in, I don't feel the least bit of interest in the profession. I don't object to anything new and scientific, but surgery and physic considered in the

light of professional matters are simply an abomination.'

'But what on earth has put that notion into your head, Frank? You're much too good a fellow to be extinguished under a cloud of mulin, like most fools. What's ailing the lad?'

'I don't know,' said Frank, dreamily. 'I suppose it is as Locksley Hall says, "In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns the thoughts of love." Yesterday was the first day of spring, the sky was as blue as in June.'

'That fellow, Locksley Hall, is only an idiot,' said the matter-of-fact Mr. Davenport.

'You're only an idiot yourself, Davenport,' said Frank. 'Locksley Hall isn't a man but a poem.'

'Worse and worse,' said Davenport, 'if you're going to spoil yourself for all the purposes of good society and go mooning about after a petticoat.'

Davenport and Egerton had been fellow-students at Guy's, Davenport being by some years the senior man. Davenport was hard-headed, acute, industrious, did himself great credit, and was now laying the foundations of an extensive practice. I am afraid Egerton was rather an example of the Idle Apprentice. Languid, elegant, handsome, he had not much appreciation of hard work. He dabbled a little in medicine, but only as he dabbled in music, painting, and private theatricals. But he was a kindhearted man, highly intelligent, and of wide, generous culture, but like the gorgeous lilies, he did not care to toil or spin. And his lucky stars seemed to be very much of the same opinion, for a rather distant relative, in quite a promiscuous way, left him a fortune of twenty thousand pounds. He had now very handsome rooms in South Kensington, where he had as fine a collection of water-colour paintings and the more expensive kinds of photographs as could be desired, and some fine gems. Mr. Davenport was leaning back in one of the cosy arm-chairs, having dropped in for a cigar and a chat on his way home from seeing some patients.

'Any young woman in particular, Frank?' asked Davenport.

'Why, there is, and there isn't,' said Frank. 'It's very odd, but I really, after a sort of way, fell in love with a girl at first sight. It was at the Opera that it came off: lots of this kind of thing come off at the Opera. It was at the set of representations which Mapleson gave last autumn. I had been to see my favourite opera "*Il Flauto Magico*," some of the finest music that Mozart ever composed. I stared about, like the rest of the people, between the acts, and on my right, in the box immediately above me, was one of the loveliest girls that I had ever seen. It so happened that I presently came quite close to her in the crush-room. Her party came to sit at a little table close to the sofa when I was doing *Maraschino* and soda. I assure you that to watch that girl move across the room was poetry in itself. Such deep eyes, such finely-cut lips you never saw, and as for hair the most beautiful.'

'We'll take the hair and eyes for granted,' said Mr. Davenport. 'Did you find out anything about her?'

'Not a bit,' he said; 'but by the luckiest chance in the world she dropped her handkerchief. It ought to have been a bit of the opera itself instead of a mere affair of the crush-room. She noticed the loss almost as soon as I did, but nothing can rob me of the consolation that I certainly handed it to her, and received one of the most gracious smiles that I ever beheld in my life. It did for me completely. I went down, bayoneted by a glance. When I saw them leave their box, I made my way into the lobby, where I presently saw them waiting for a carriage. Some name was called, and to my misery, I could not distinguish what the name was. But I ran out into the portico after it, nearly run over by the next carriage and almost taken up by the nearest policeman. It was hard work to keep the carriage in sight, until I could hail a hansom and tell the driver to follow that particular carriage. Did you ever

follow a girl in that way, Davenport?"

'Can't say I ever made such an ass of myself, hitherto, old fellow,' said Mr. Davenport; 'but we none of us know what we may come to.'

'Then let me tell you, it's a very queer thing to be following a person in that fashion. As Victor Hugo, who seems to know a deal about the subject, says, "You are altogether for a time surrendering to a stranger your liberty and your individuality." To my great satisfaction the hansom proceeded in the South Kensington direction. It would not have been pleasant to have been landed on the other side of Regent's Park. It passed my very door. Then suddenly we came upon a whole lot of carriages coming or going from a curious old countess's, who always gives parties in the dead season of the year. We must have lost the clue, for my hansom stopped when the brougham stopped, and I was brought face to face with a motley-faced old gentleman with a knobbly nose, who evidently regarded me as a member of the swell mob.'

'And you have never seen her again?'

'Never; but I quite fell in love with the little party; at first sight; and if she felt inclined to marry me, that's very much the sort of thing that I should feel inclined to do with her. I am essentially an animal constructed for the purposes of domesticity, a Newfoundland dog man, and that sort of thing. Club life is an organized sort of selfishness; that is all. One is even tired of travel. One knows what there is to expect, and it's not so much after all. So, by an exhaustive process of reasoning, we fall back on the blessed and comfortable estate.'

'It all depends whether it really is blessed and comfortable, old fellow, because it's quite possible that it may turn out quite the other way. They say that marriage is a lottery, but, by Jove, most people make it up as John Leech's idiot made up his Derby book—can't possibly win and may lose ever so much.'

'What do you think of my little affair?'

'Very badly. It's romantic. Most romantic affairs turn out badly. I've a very low opinion of them.'

'I thought, old fellow, that you would have taken a more friendly and generous view of things.'

'I don't take an unfriendly view, Egerton. I don't even say with Mr. Tennyson's new style of "Northern Farmer," "Proputty—proputty—proputty." But I speak as a man who has watched life, and who has watched it under a scientific point of view.'

'What do you mean by that last observation?'

'Why, I mean that there are a lot of points which a scientific, or even a sensible man will consider before he commits himself, and which a man in love never thinks of doing. In the first place there is the *physique*. Look well at her teeth—a most important matter; good teeth are becoming quite scarce in the market. You rave about eyes and hair; teeth are just as important. Then is the girl really educated? Beneath a smattering of accomplishments it is very hard to find out whether there is any real training or real knowledge. Then as for disposition, you may have as soft a spoken lass as you like, and in a few months she may prove a thorough vixen, and develop a capacity for abusive language for which the vernacular English is only a feeble instrument. Even if she don't use bad language, she may still use her words as I use my lanceta. Then, perhaps, she has got some radical inherent vice—drinks, lies, pads, paints. There is nothing you can't believe of the "girl of the period." Then she may inherit a bad constitution from some rascally ancestor; and if you have a flaw in your own what's to become of the children?—Scrofula, consumption, madness.'

'You infernal old beast to talk that way!'

'That's just it. You have no pure spirit of science about you, a mere empiric. In these days of deterioration we should all go to the bad if it were not for the happy tendency of nature always to revert to the original pure type. But I've finished

my bit of smoke, and must stroll. I have half a mind to go into the South Kensington Museum; it is not often that I find myself so close to it.'

'Seems to me rather a slow sort of thing to do.'

'Yes; but nothing pays so well at a small evening party. South Kensington generally crops up at a small tea-fight.'

So the men got up—it was just close by—and then went into the South Kensington Museum, which seemed, at least that evening, to be in a languid sort of way, and not to be doing much public business. The British working man, after a hard day's work, prefers his pipe and a pot of beer to most æsthetic enjoyments that can be offered to him. Still there were a few strolling about, with an expression of intense stolidity, apparently without the slightest idea of the nature or significance of the objects before them. The place was, in fact, almost deserted; the feeding-places shut up, the galleries still. The two men strolled about. Egerton liked doing nothing, and he did it to perfection. Davenport's quick eye took in many things which, by their nature and their scientific relations, doubtless gave him a keen intellectual pleasure. Some cases of coins and gems had recently been deposited here by one of those enlightened public benefactors who from time to time yield up the contents of their galleries and cabinets for the benefit of the British public. Just then a young lady, attended by her maid, passed on to the cabinet of gems; and now it was possible to see the difference between an intelligent and an unintelligent examination of pretty things. This young lady, who had gems of her own about her, evidently knew a good deal about gems. With an eager curiosity she examined specimens; in a dainty little memorandum, in true artist fashion, she made a slight sketch or two.

As she was thus occupied, the two young men commenced a conversation which could hardly fail to be audible to a bystander; and Davenport noticed a curious intellectual phenomenon in his friend.

Though talking to him, he was evidently talking at the young lady. Her face could not be seen; but the lithe, graceful outlines of the form could be seen, full of curves and softness, instinct and informed with spirit, to which sound teeth must have infallibly belonged, and a sound constitution, such as would have satisfied Mr. Davenport's physiological opinions. Egerton began talking with an evident intention to arrest and interest the attention of the young lady. Davenport had never before noticed such a circumstance in his friend; but he had noticed it in various instances, and in Egerton's case it almost seemed to him that it was a sort of yearning for sympathy, a desire to be brought into some sort of converse with this clever, graceful girl, though the converse should be all on one side.

'A queer thing happened to a friend of mine,' said Egerton, 'who went to a great gallery to inspect a precious gem. The gem was exceedingly valuable, and was kept under a glass case, and only shown by special permission, under the care of an official. The man went to see it, and examined it with the greatest care and admiration. After some little space the officer said that if he had finished his examination they would now go. The man said, "Certainly. He had finished a minute or two ago, and was now ready to leave." "Then where was the ring?" "Oh, he laid it down on its case." But no ring was there. A search was made, but in vain; the ring had vanished. Then the officer said that he must search the visitor. The visitor objected. The officer said his duty was imperative. The visitor swore that he would rather be slain on the spot than submit to such an insult. As the officer persisted, the visitor threw himself into a fighting attitude, and the officer called for assistance. Several men came up; but in the middle of the hubbub some sharper-witted public servant discovered that the gem had fallen down between the velvet and the frame of the case. Mutual congratulations and excuses followed. Then the visitor stepped forward

and said, "I will now tell you the reason why I would not submit to be searched. I have a gem about me which is the perfect facsimile of this one. I had not thought that there was one in the world like it, and I came on purpose to see. Now, if you had found this gem upon me, your own unfound, you would have taken it to be the gem that was lost, and I should have been condemned. I could not submit to that while I was alive."

'What an extraordinary story, Egerton,' said Davenport. 'Where did you pick it up? and who was the man?'

'It happened to myself, last summer, at Munich,' replied Egerton, quietly. 'The gem was an antique, which had been recovered at Pompeii, at least as old as the Christian era. Here it is in this ring.'

Just at this moment the young lady, whose head aslant had showed that she was listening to the story which Egerton had designed her to hear, turned round, and Egerton was hardly surprised—'his heart had been a prophet to his heart'—that it was the lovely girl of the Opera.

'By Jove! Davenport, the girl I saw on "Il Flauto Magico" night.'

'Have you lured her with a Zauberflotte of your own?' said Davenport, a little savagely.

The young lady gave a half-conscious look of recognition and surprise, which the doctor's keen eye did not fail to recognize; and then, with provoking *nonchalance*, passed away to a distant case, where the friends could hardly venture to follow her.

They went into the entrance, however, and sat down in the porch instead of going out into the Brompton Road. The big trees in front gloomed heavily in the starlight. A solitary carriage was standing in waiting. Egerton was excited and feverish. He wrapt his cloak round him, and continued moodily silent. He already felt quite certain that this was the carriage which he had followed from Covent Garden. Presently the carriage-door was flung open, and the same young lady tripped to the

steps. And the carriage went off at a sharp trot.

'Will you try your luck again?' whispered Davenport; 'shall I hail a hansom?'

Egerton wildly gesticulated. But his friend's strong grasp was upon his arm, and it was obviously impossible that he should be able to gain the carriage so as to identify it.

'There goes my chance again,' he growled, 'for the second time, and I have lost it.'

'The third time's lucky,' said Davenport, phlegmatically.

The third time really came. That things which are to be will be, is the approved and fundamental axiom of fatalism. There is a good deal of romance left in this used-up old world, if you are romantic enough to understand. At least so it came to pass at South Kensington.

Egerton was 'seedy.' He had no confidence in his own medical skill. If he ever had any, which is very doubtful, it had vanished as soon as the aunt's big pot of money had fallen in. So he asked Davenport, the friend, who with all his hardness was 'as his own soul' to him, to prescribe. Davenport came, and discharged the duty, which is frequently the first and most necessary part of a doctor's duty—he bullied and aroused the patient, shook him out of his languor and indifference, confiscated his regalias, and turned him out into the fresh air. Davenport, though a rising man, was not so busy that he could not afford half an hour to an old friend whose health, moral and physical, wanted toning and bracing. So they paid their shillings and went into the Horticultural Gardens.

It was not a public day, you understand. Nothing in the way of grand music or stately promenade. They might suddenly have passed into the loneliness of a tropical forest instead of being hemmed in on every side with a wilderness of brick and mortar. From that very pretty entrance passage with its summer bloom they passed on to the smooth turf with the enamelled flower-beds. The space is after all

not much, and is soon exhausted; but it so happened that, except a few children with nurses or governesses, there was no one there. Then they walked in the noble conservatory, and ascending the broad flight of steps, examined, so far as they could, the progress of the Albert Memorial building. As they paused on the highest terrace to catch the purer softer breeze, and leaned on the balcony to watch the lovely scene below, with a sigh of regret that they and other Londoners should have the unwisdom of so seldom coming here except in the crowd which takes away half the beauty of the scene, Egerton looked around, with a certain lassitude and indifference which was not altogether pleasing to the skilled eye of his friend, always on a scientific look out for the possibilities of evil.

Presently, Davenport said, with a curious expression, 'Unless I am greatly mistaken, Egerton, here comes a friend of yours.'

The languor and indifference were all gone. With the utmost excitement he exclaimed, 'You don't mean *her*!'

'I don't know whom you mean by *her*. As she must have some name or other I shall call her Lady Adelgiza South Kensington, until I know her real name. I mean, however, the lady we saw at the Museum and whom you say you saw at the Opera.'

'You can't see her face.'

'No, but I recognize her gait. Very few young ladies can mount steps so gracefully as she is doing.'

Egerton was visibly agitated.

'Do you really care for this girl, Frank?'

'Don't ask me. I am quite in love with her.'

Now this was truly astonishing to Davenport. It was something altogether foreign to his scientific habits of mind. No amount of medical lore would give him an explanation. 'It's an ultimate fact,' he murmured to himself, 'and we must puzzle away at it.'

'Something must be done, and be done quickly,' said Egerton, 'or else the tide in the affairs of men will have ebbed altogether. Help

me, Davenport,' he added, almost piteously.

'I will, old fellow,' said the medical. 'Have you got that ring with the antique gem?'

'Here it is.'

'Do you mind the risk of losing it for the chance of finding out all about the girl?'

'I would risk it a hundred times over.'

'Then leave it on the balustrade and come this way.'

The ring was placed on the balustrade, and Egerton hastily followed his friend down into the grounds.

'Now stop a bit, Egerton,' said Mr. Davenport. 'I don't think we can be observed here; but I will see what I can make out with the help of my field glass.'

Oh, those field-glasses and telescopes! They have well-nigh abolished obscurity from the British Isles. All the coast line is swept by the coastguard's telescope. All hills are watched by gamekeepers' glasses. Lonely lovers, wandering in unfrequented solitudes, you little imagine what powerful optical instruments may be brought to bear upon you!

'Yes,' murmured Davenport, 'she is on the terrace—she is walking along; now I call that a really gracious walk—the sunlight on the gem will probably strike that acute eye of hers—she is moving towards the balustrade—she is going to take up the ring; yes, no, yes, no, yes—now she is examining it. Putting it on her finger, I declare—that is coming it rather strong. All over with your ring, old fellow. Your pretty girl has turned petty larcener, has put it into her pocket and walked off. She ought to be searched, as they wanted to search you at Munich.'

'I suppose we had better wait till they come down and then ask whether they have found a ring.'

'Not a bad card, but still there is a better card to play. It is a case of winning or losing. I must disappoint you, old fellow. We had better not meet them, but dodge about until they are gone.'

As soon as they were gone they made inquiries at the lodges, and

found that no lost article had been left there that morning.

'Now, old fellow, I have only one word to say to you,' said Mr. Davenport; 'for the next few days or weeks keep a sharp look-out on the second column of the "Times."'

In five days' time his eye alighted on an advertisement in the second column: 'Found in the Horticultural Gardens, an antique ring with gem. The owner can recover it, on identifying it, at 100, Cromwell Buildings. The reader learned in localities will perceive that I have given a non-existent number.'

He found out that Lady Harbinger lived here. He called one morning at two and sent up his card. As he entered the drawing-room, a lovely girl, music in hand, was about to escape through the door.

Her sapphire eyes met his, and she coloured up deliciously. 'Ah,' she said, 'you have come about your ring. I could not help hearing you talk about it at the Museum;—it was a wonder if she could have helped;—what an extraordinary thing that I should have been the person who discovered your loss!'

'Not so extraordinary, perhaps, if you only knew all,' thought Mr. Egerton. 'A most extraordinary coincidence; and there is another one still more extraordinary, if you recollect; I had the honour of picking up your handkerchief in the crush-room of the Opera.'

'I fancied something of the sort, but I was not sure,' said Lucy Harbinger.

'You are fond of gems, I suppose?' said Egerton.

'Yes; and I have reason to be. My uncle left me a little cabinet, beautifully laid out and catalogued; so I really take quite a professional interest in them.'

Just then Lady Harbinger entered—the widow of a country baronet—an open-hearted, kind dowager. She duly put Mr. Egerton through the necessary catechizing, and restored him his Pompeii ring.

Then there was some conversation, and it was presently discovered that Lady Harbinger's mother had known Mr. Egerton's aunt intimately. But so it commonly is in life. The surface of society is much smaller than is generally supposed. Put any two people together, and they are sure enough to discover common acquaintance.

'And now, Mr. Egerton, you shall see my cabinet; and I have quite a collection of books on the subject—Mr. King's and all the rest.'

It was a pretty collection, and its money value was considerable; but I suppose Lucy did not look upon it in this point of view.

'You must have taken a great deal of trouble, and spent money on that advertisement, Lady Harbinger,' said Mr. Egerton. 'Will you kindly let me know what I am indebted to you, besides your boundless kindness?'

'Oh, you must not talk about that,' said Lucy. 'The pleasure of becoming acquainted with such a ring was quite worth the trouble.'

'Then, Miss Harbinger, you must positively do me the honour of putting this ring in your cabinet. In my hands it is quite lost; but it will have an added value in any collection.'

And he more than ever resolved in his own mind that he would also offer another ring of a much plainer description.

With some difficulty, and after some visits, Lucy was brought to accept that particular ring. I think it not impossible but she will accept the other ring also. Mr. Davenport must take a favourable view of all the conditions, as he proffers to be best man. But this is only a fragmentary story. I have nothing to do with the usual humdrum of courtship, settlements, and the ceremony, but only with a set of certain odd circumstances which made up a sort of romance in South Kensington.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

By A PERIPATETIC.

CONTEMPORARY BIOGRAPHY.

SEVERAL works have recently appeared of 'contemporary biography,' by which we mean biography or autobiography of men who have occupied some space in the public eye, and who have only recently been removed from us, or perhaps are still among us. Such works of biography, however much they may lack force, shape, or literary merit, nevertheless form a portion of the materials from which the secular and ecclesiastical history of our wonderful era must be built up. Yet we must say with regret that the literary workmanship of some of those recent biographies is deplorably bad, so much so that we feel inclined to fling aside the works in disgust as unworthy of perusal. It would, however, be a mistake to do this. Even in the most unpromising books we may find stray paragraphs very well worthy of being rescued from oblivion, and giving interesting glances into English and foreign interiors.

We cannot, however, give even this limited recommendation to some of the biographies that we see. Here, for instance, is a thick book giving the biography of the late Henry Hoare.* We have carefully looked it through with the intention, as our manner is, to take some of the cream off the book. But you cannot get cream from skim-milk and water. We have found it quite impossible to cull a single paragraph or even a single sentence from the life of Mr. Hoare that is worth quotation. This is a great pity, for Henry Hoare had a strongly-marked idiosyncrasy of his own; and any man of descriptive talent who knew him well and could appreciate his character, could have given us a portraiture of one who had much

picturesqueness as well as solid worth. Mr. Hoare was a man of considerable mental power and of great activity; a most earnest and devout churchman, who loved the Established Church with passionate attachment, and spent himself and his substance on her behalf. It so happened that the present writer spent a day in Mr. Hoare's company just before the lamentable and extraordinary accident which caused his death. He was looking out of the window of a railway carriage, and his head came in contact with a telegraph-post, causing fracture of the skull. The occasion referred to was a public festivity, and Mr. Hoare and the writer were the only fellow-guests at a friend's house. There was something extremely simple, kindly, and old-fashioned about him. A great deal had been done to spoil him by making him the oracle of a set, but he was unspoiled for all that. He made a great many speeches that day, one of which was very much to the purpose, for he gave the good cause a hundred pounds, and would give more if more were wanted. But Mr. Hoare always had a most absolute delight in giving. After a substantial lunch he asked for his room and solemnly retired thither. He came back for the early cup of tea, and told us he had taken a siesta, as was his invariable habit. We only mention this as Mr. Sweet tells us that it was his habit to rise in the middle of the night and spend one or more hours in writing. We can understand this superhuman habit with the help of the siesta; but without it Mr. Hoare would be burning the candle at both ends, and he did not at all seem the sort of man to do that sort of thing. I remember one curious bit of conversation. He had always been a model churchwarden, and at one of the church congresses he had said

* 'A Memoir of Henry Hoare, Esq., M.A. With a Narrative of the Church Movements,' &c. By James Bradley Sweet, M.A. Rivingtons.

that if people did not pay church rates they ought to be 'quodded,' and he would 'quod' them. I ventured to tell him that this was rather hard language, and that people thought it harsh. In reply he utterly disclaimed any intention of meaning prison by 'quod,' which at least showed a laudable ignorance of the force of slang expressions. It is well known that he had promised to give a thousand a year towards that magnificent tower of that now magnificent chapel of St. John's College, Cambridge, the foundation stone of which he laid. He expressly stipulated that this annual payment was only to be while he was living, and by his death this resource failed the college after two years' payments. Peace to his honoured memory! He was good, worthy, useful; but the idea of manufacturing a big book about him appears to us to be exceedingly incongruous.

In some respects better, but in other respects immeasurably worse, is Mr. James Grant's life of Sir George Sinclair.* This is a provoking book. Sir George Sinclair was undoubtedly a remarkable man, and the book contains much that is very readable and interesting, but it is frightfully marred by ignorance, stupidity, and fulsomeness. More craven adulation of titled people we have nowhere seen. Mr. Grant quotes a duke rather than a baron, and a baron rather than a baronet, and twaddle by a titled person rather than common sense by a commoner. There was a clergyman of high social mark whom many of our readers may recollect, Mr. Hamilton Gray, of Bolsover Castle, with whom Sir George Sinclair corresponded in closest friendship and intimacy for very many years. We know enough of the late Mr. Hamilton Gray to be able to say that this correspondence must have been eminently interesting and instructive; but we are not favoured with a single line, while the merest, most trivial notes of men of title are admitted. It would be easy to

point out some ludicrous errors which he has made; but it is really not worth while to waste powder and shot on such a poor writer as Mr. James Grant, amiable and well-meaning as he may be, always barring his idolatry of Debreit.

Yet this stupid book contains some extremely interesting and important matter, which may be lost for readers who throw it aside in disgust. Sir George Sinclair himself, though he runs a danger of being made ridiculous by undiscerning, extravagant panegyric, had all the elements of a good man and some of the elements of a great man. There are a few letters and anecdotes in the work which amply repay the trouble of perusal. Lord Byron spoke of Sinclair as being the prodigy of Harrow. There is here an interesting anecdote of Byron, how he once said to Sir Robert Abercrombie, 'How is your mother?' I very well remember the beating she made my mother give me; but tell her from me it would have been well for me if they had been many more.' In his early travels the famous incident befel him of being captured a few days before the battle of Jena was fought, and being brought into the presence of Napoleon. The Emperor treated him, as soon as he had laid aside his suspicions, with great good-nature, asking him what classical authors he was reading. Sinclair actually pointed out on the map the memorable spot of Jena to Napoleon. This remarkable occurrence naturally formed one of Sir George's stock stories, and he had to tell it so often that at last he refused to tell it any more. Sir George represented his county, and made an effective public speaker, as patriotic as Joseph Hume himself, with whom he lived on terms of fullest intimacy. There is in this volume an interesting account of the strange malady which befel Lord Glenelg. Though a cabinet minister, and a great favourite in society, he suddenly secluded himself from the public for ten years, passing most of his time in his chair gazing upon the opposite wall. At the end of that time he once more resumed his old position, full of life

* 'Memoirs of Sir George Sinclair, Bart., of Ulbster.' By James Grant. Tinsley.

and energy as in his palmiest days.* Some of the letters preserved in the volume have considerable importance. For instance, we have several from Croker, the Mr. Rigby of Disraeli's 'Coningsby,' which are eminently autobiographic. They give a much more favourable view of him than we derive from Macaulay and Disraeli. 'I have a couple of thousands a year. I am, therefore, a rich man. I spend all that income, little on myself, no more than is necessary in eating and drinking, some in charity, and all the rest in giving work and employment to the various classes of persons who come in contact with me. My wife goes every day of her life, for two or three hours, into the village. She visits the sick daily, the afflicted frequently, the needy as much as she can. I help her by encouraging and enabling her, according to my means, to do all this. But what can we do more?' Before leaving the book we will take some extracts from it, chiefly from letters of celebrated persons, which have a place in contemporary history.

Sir Charles Wetherell.—'He was unique, in relation to his dress and his deportment. No Jew old-clothesman would at any time have given half a crown for his whole wardrobe. He was never known to have a new suit of clothes, he never wore braces, his aversion to them was intense. The natural consequence of his persistent hostility to braces was that he had constantly to give a shrug to his whole body in order to raise his nether garments to their proper position on his person. It was often very awkward when witnessed in the House of Commons and repeatedly called forth bursts of laughter.'

The Queen and Bishop Waldegrave.—'I remember that, some years ago, on being shown by the Hon. S. Waldegrave a magnificently-bound volume which the Queen had given him for a present, I was rather puzzled to know how the inscrip-

tion by her Majesty could accord with the fact which it expressed. The inscription, written in the Queen's own hand, was—"To the Hon. Samuel Waldegrave, Lord Bishop of Carlisle, from his affectionate cousin, Victoria." On asking the late most excellent bishop how the relationship was made out, he said that in the reign of Queen Anne an ancestor of his married a German princess, who was an ancestor of Queen Victoria, and that in virtue of that marriage her Majesty always spoke of him as her cousin.'

A Letter from Lord Derby.—'I delayed thanking you, in Lady Derby's name, for the geese and mountain dew till I could tell you that they have been subjected to the criticism of the Duke of Cambridge and a party who have been sporting here; and I am happy to be able to announce that the verdict was triumphantly in their favour. The "dew," especially, was thought so highly of, that I should take it as a favour if you can and will purchase for me a case of the same quality, say about two dozen bottles, and I will pay you like an honest man. Your friend Mr. Gruneisen is an excellent man, but he writes an execrable hand. . . . Thanks for what you are doing for the Lancashire distress.'

Lord Derby on the Cession of Savoy.—'The last forty-eight hours have completely stripped off the masks from both emperor and king, and have shown themselves and their motives in the clearest, if not in the cleanest point of view. . . . I am of opinion that all confidence in the sincerity of the emperor is for ever destroyed; and that we must look henceforth to the necessity of being thoroughly prepared for a rupture with him whenever the necessities of his position make it his policy to come to an open quarrel.'

Lord Derby to Sir George as a Widower.—'I have always thought that to the survivor of those who have enjoyed a long life of married happiness, the best consolation, next to the conviction of the assured happiness of the departed, must be the knowledge that in the course of nature the separation cannot be for

* We ought to say that Lord Glenelg's friends vehemently impugn this alleged fact. We retain it in our text, inasmuch as a very similar case, and even more remarkable, has come within our experience.

a very lengthened period. Whatever other or better comfort you are capable of receiving under such a bereavement, may He give you, who only can.'

Letter from Mr. Disraeli.—'I do not pretend to be a correspondent, as I have often told you. I am overworked, otherwise I should be very glad to communicate with you, of all men, in the spirit, and bathe the memory sometimes in those delicious passages of ancient songs, which your unrivalled scholarship so beautifully commands. My dear friend John Manners writes to me every week, now he is shut out from Parliament, and expects no return; but he gives me his impressions and counsels, often the clearer for his absence from our turbulent and excited scene. . . . On Tuesday will commence one of the most important debates that ever took place in the House of Commons. I shall reserve myself, I apprehend, to the end. It will last several nights. There is a passage about usury, which haunts my memory, and which I fancied was in Juvenal, but I could not light on it as I threw my eye over the pages yesterday. Notwithstanding our utilitarian senate, I wish, if possible, that the noble Roman spirit should sometimes be felt in the House of Commons, expressed in its own magnificent tongue. I have of late years ventured sometimes on this, and not without success.'

From Mr. Carlyle on Lady Sinclair's death, &c.—'It is the way of all the earth;' yea, and has been since man was first made. And yet there is a strange originality in it to every one of us when it comes upon him in its course. I grieve to think how sad you are. Words are very idle; so are wishes: I will say no more on the subject. Time, by degrees, smooths away the first asperities; then Death has a kind of bland aspect, most sad but also most sacred: the one home appointed to us all.

'I am still kept overwhelmingly busy here; my strength slowly diminishing, my work progressing still more slowly—my heart really almost broken. In some six or eight

months—surely not longer than eight—I hope to have at last done: it will be the gladdest day I have seen for ten years back, pretty much the one glad day! I have still half a volume to do; still a furious struggle, and *tour de force*, as there have been many, to wind matters up in half a volume. But this is the last, if I can but do it; and if health holds out in any fair measure, I always hope I can.

'Your pamphlet on Napoleon has never come. I am happy to agree entirely in what you say about that renowned Corsican gentleman, and about his sham synonym of these present times, which I still more heartily dissent from, and even take the liberty of despising. Probably nothing can be written upon them that will do much good. There is such an outpouring of disloyal platitudes and vocal jockassery, of every figure, in these times, as quite disgusts one with the pen and almost with the tongue itself. Farewell, dear sir; may your pious heart soon compose itself, and be able to say—what Wisdom has in all dialects prescribed since Wisdom first was—"Good is the will of the Lord."'

Continuing our unamiable vein of disparagement, we cannot say that Lady Eastlake's Memoir* of Sir Charles at all satisfies our notions of a biography or even of a fairly good memoir. The larger part of the second volume of Sir Charles's writings on the Fine Arts is occupied by this Memoir. Sir Charles Eastlake probably deserves much of the same praise which was passed on Sir Joshua—that his books made speaking pictures and his pictures a dumb book. On the present occasion, however, we are looking out for biographical facts—anecdote-mongering, in fact. There is something intensely classical and correct about him; but there appears to have been some lack of imagination, of romance, of earnestness. When Haydon instructed him in painting, and doubtless gave an in-

* 'Contributions to the Literature of the Fine Arts. By Sir C. L. Eastlake, F.R.S., D.C.L., &c. With a Memoir, compiled by Lady Eastlake.' London: Murray.

tense intellectual stimulus to his mind, a coldness ensued because poor Haydon, *more suo*, did not refund moneys borrowed; and when he was introduced to the great anatomist, Sir Charles Bell, his criticism was that he was the most gentlemanly man he had ever seen. His parents showed great good sense in withdrawing their son from the Charter-house, and when they clearly saw the bias of his mind in permitting him to follow it. Eastlake was also, fortunately, able to go abroad and obtain that art-education which English skies and English schools could not give him. In Greece he met the 'Maid of Athens' and her sisters. 'They are not remarkably beautiful but interesting and lady-like.' In society Sir Charles became a great man and visited various great houses. He kept a diary, but it is of too private a nature to admit of publication. We are permitted, however, to obtain glimpses. Here is positively a new anecdote of Sydney Smith:—'The other day he had some business at the Mansion House, and while talking, without knowing who the people all were, some person handed a paper to him on which was written—"The gentleman you are speaking to is the Lord Mayor Elect." He said he instantly thought of the Roman ambassador to Carthage who was suddenly shown an elephant, and, to the disappointment of all, betrayed no emotion.' He confirms the general opinion about Macaulay. 'Macaulay, though always worth listening to, is such an indefatigable talker that few of the rest could say much. He is never long on one subject, but goes off on the slightest hint or association, especially if suggested by another. The effect is curious.' We certainly think that it was an intellectual flaw in Macaulay that he was so entirely at the mercy of the association of ideas. It was difficult to strike any deep stratum in his mind when he was always flying off at one tangent or another. Here is something about the Queen and the Prince:—

The Queen.—'The perfection with which my imagination soon endowed her Majesty was a most agreeable

voice, and a pronunciation of English fit to be an example for all her subjects. If you were to hear it without seeing the speaker, you would associate with it a musical ear and a consummate education, but combining with the impression of feminine taste that of the consciousness of power.'

The Prince Consort.—'The Prince had desired Mr. Eastlake to wait on him at Buckingham Palace. It was the first time Mr. Eastlake had seen his royal highness, and as a painter, he may be excused for a painter's remark—namely, that "the Prince stood in a strong light which showed his beautiful face to great advantage." On this occasion the Prince discussed the object and plan of the Commission; Mr. Eastlake occasionally making objections when he thought them necessary. "Two or three times I quite forgot who he was—he talked so naturally and argued so fairly." The Prince did not sanction the employment of German workmen even for subordinate labours, and expressed his conviction that in all that belonged to practical dexterity, the Englishman took the lead of the foreigner. . . . The Prince immediately presented Mr. Eastlake to the Queen, but acted himself as cicerone, taking her Majesty from one side to the other with eager interest.'

Sir Charles was very intimate with Sir Robert Peel, and gives a highly-favourable view of that much-abused statesman. There was something in his mind highly akin to Sir Robert's. After he had published his edition of 'Kugler's Handbook,' by which he will always be generally known, he found that the statesman had fully mastered its contents.

We are thankful that Earl Russell has prefixed to his 'Speeches and Despatches' an autobiographical introduction.* Their tendency will be to considerably elevate Lord Russell in public estimation; and perhaps Lord Russell required a little elevating. It is

* 'Selections from Speeches of Earl Russell, 1817 to 1841, and from Despatches, 1859 to 1865. With Introductions.' Two vols. Longmans.

impossible not to feel sympathy with a man who says, 'I have committed many errors, some of them gross blunders. . . . My capacity, I have always felt, was very inferior to that of the men who have attained in past times the foremost place in our Parliament, and in the councils of our sovereign,' and yet who can point to 'the regard and favourable interpretation of my motives which I have heard expressed by my generous opponents, from the days of Lord Castlereagh to those of Mr. Disraeli.' There is a feeling postscript, expressing a due meed of reverence for the character of the late Lord Derby. Lord Russell, with amiable garrulity, gives us some anecdotes of his early days, and he also elucidates some important points in public history. From his youth up he has been a marked man among the marked; he had a seat in Parliament before he came of age; he was with Wellington within the lines of Torres Vedras, and conversed with Napoleon at Elba. He gives a full, ungrudging testimony to the greatness of the Duke's character, and his wonderful force and coolness in moments of the deepest peril. Here is a touching incident which relieves the waste of political strife. Lord Russell does not vouch for, but he fully credits the anecdote: 'When Grattan's friends were assembled round his bed, the dying patriot said to them, "Don't be hard upon Castlereagh—he loves our country."' It is added, that when Lord Castlereagh heard of these words of his great opponent he burst into tears. Lord Russell has an affecting mention of the great sorrow of Canning when so many deserted him on the Catholic question, including Sir Robert Peel, who eventually carried the measure. No amount of explanation, no discovered political information, effectually clears away the dark stain of obliquity on Peel's career. The question was asked whether the office had been filled up. The answer was the monosyllable 'Yes;' but pronounced in such a tone of mingled scorn, anger, and grief, that it seemed as if the heart of him who uttered it were breaking with vexa-

tion and disappointment. Lord Russell explains, and justifies, the perpetual ostracism of Lord Brougham from official life. All Brougham's vast powers were neutralised by his want of judgment, which prevented any party from giving him their confidence, and by a forgetfulness of what he himself might have been saying or doing just before. We will only say that we would cheerfully have sacrificed any amount of speeches and despatches for something more of Lord Russell's autobiography.

STRAY NOTES ON BOOKS.

Mr. Mudie advertised the other day a list of sixty new books. The number of new books is, of course, greatly beyond this, but he evidently thought that he ought to direct the attention of the public to at least sixty of them. 'Of making many books there is no end,' but of this mortal life there is a speedy one, and so we must lay out well the time which to some of us is our only estate, and to all of us the most important part of it. The mere gluttony of books of our literary Helluos is a great mistake; the man who does nothing but read cannot read to much good effect. The world of books is like the world of waters; we cannot but stand on the shore and define a course for ourselves, and try to steer into some sort of harbour or other. If we can sketch out some sort of map of the vast expanse, and mark out the different lines of intellectual effort, and watch the general drift and current of knowledge and opinion, it is as much as one in these busy days can really hope to do. The Peripatetic looks into a good many books, it is his nature so to do and he had some thought of compiling an *Index Expurgatorius*, concerning which he would say to people about to read 'don't.' Only the difficulty occurs to him that that would be a way of advertising the bad books. So he will take a constructive method, and, most genial of critics, will try only to mention good works. Sometimes he

attempts to deal with such books in some detail, but *spatiis inclusus iniquis*, he will only drop sundry hints, but on the *verbum sap.* principle.

We hardly thought, that after Dean Stanley's 'Sinai and Palestine' there would yet be room for another similar work. Yet the 'Rob Roy on the Jordan'* may not unfittingly be classed in the same category. Mr. Macgregor has done Egypt and Syria even as the Dean has done them; and though he has not done the peninsula of Sinai he has explored the 'rivers of Damascus' as only a man in a canoe could explore them. And though he has not the finished literary style of the Dean, yet there is throughout the volume a spice of personal daring and adventure which gives a keen interest to Mr. Macgregor's clear, unaffected, picturesque narrative. Many of us saw at the exhibition of the Palestine Exploration Fund one of the series of Rob Roy canoes; there is a full explication of it here; and the Canoe Club, of which the Prince of Wales is commodore, will more and more commend itself to genuine aquatic tastes. Mr. Macgregor is the great original canoeist, with the solitary good fault, so far as we can make out, of being a little too careless and adventuresome. This led to his capture on Lake Hooley ('the waters of Merom') by the Arabs of the neighbourhood; and if Mr. Macgregor is not more careful in future he may not get off so easily as he did on this occasion. It is pleasant to find that the awe of our expedition to Abyssinia was not unfelt even by those ignorant, lawless tribes. Mr. Macgregor has before now given us some very interesting accounts of his travels with 'the young lady,' as his faithful dragoman Hany called the canoe, but he has now altogether taken higher ground. He comes before us as a geographer and as an illustrator of Scripture, and in each direction he attains to very high honours. The critic's work becomes genial and easy enough

* 'Rob Roy on the Jordan, Nile, Red Sea, and Gennesaret,' &c. By J. Macgregor, M.A. Murray.

when he has little else to do than shower pleasant epithets. This is not a book to be lightly borrowed from the library and glanced at, but to be bought, to be read, to be referred to.

Now that Mr. Froude has concluded his history, there is no historical work, of which, at least, our own land is the subject, that can in any degree compete with Mr. Freeman's 'History of the Norman Conquest.' As a matter of fact, we have no doubt that, in the opinion of another generation, Mr. Freeman will stand far ahead of Mr. Froude. Mr. Freeman gives us the third volume of his history about a year after the publication of his second, a case of literary industry well worth noting. Now we vehemently exhort our readers to procure and study Mr. Freeman's work. If they have not read the previous volumes, they may nevertheless commence with the present, which has a history of its own. As a preparation for it they cannot do better than read Lord Lytton's noble novel of 'Harold,' which Mr. Freeman repeatedly mentions with respect. The reader will find much that is discouraging about the volume. Mr. Freeman is pedantically precise in his Early English orthography, speaking of Eadward, Egbricht, and so on; his notes bristle with Latin and Early English; he has an Appendix of two hundred pages, which few English readers will care to discuss, unless, indeed, the section relating to the Bayonne tapestry. Our advice to the well-beloved reader is to skip all this, but at the same time not to skip a word belonging to Mr. Freeman's main narrative. For he has with infinite pains constructed a narrative of a portion of our national history which is indeed a foundation of all subsequent history—a portion which hitherto has been ignored or has been read defectively or amiss. He will find that history put forth with a force, eloquence, picturesqueness, and keen historical insight difficult to be surpassed in any literature of any nation. This volume is entirely taken up with the year 1066, the

Annus Mirabilis of English history. It witnessed the death of Edward the Confessor, laid to rest within his new foundation, hardly then completed, of Westminster Abbey; he describes, as few but himself could, Edward's awful prophecy of the evils coming on England, and the fiery comet that awoke fearful apprehension all over Europe. Edward leaves his throne to Harold, annulling his former bequest to William of Normandy, and Harold's accession is ratified in the Witan by the free choice of a free people. Then he takes up the history of William of Normandy, and gives his probable version of the transactions between William and Harold, when Harold, thrown on the French coast by shipwreck, swore on the bones of the saints to meet William in war in order to secure his liberty or life. Then we have the invasion of England by his evil brother Tostig, with Harold Hardrada of Norway, the last Scandinavian invasion until Alexandra, Princess of Wales, came and took all our hearts by storm. The great battle of Stamford Bridge is fought, the invading chiefs are slain, and the remaining Northmen are graciously allowed to go homewards in their beaked ships. Three days afterwards, while Harold is at high banquet, a fleet messenger from Sussex arrives and tells him that William has effected his landing and is harrying the country with fire and sword. Harold moves southward, although he has lost so much of the strength of his army in the great victory at Stamford Bridge. He takes up a strong position at Senlac, the true name of the locality of the so-called battle of Hastings, which was the site of the Abbey and town of Battle, from Hastings about some seven miles. The great battle is told once more, with more accuracy but not with more energy than by Lord Lytton. After the defeat comes that finding of the body of Harold, which art, poetry, and romance have duly celebrated, by a weak, loving woman, when all else had failed. It was buried without sepulture beneath a huge cairn of stones on the steep

of Hastings, where his great shadow seemed to haunt and guard the English coast, until it was borne off to his own shrine at Waltham, while the Conqueror was crowned at the Abbey amid the wild glare of houses blazing around.

This is the year's story which Mr. Freeman has to tell in his third volume, and which he tells as it has never been told before.*

We have always entertained and have expressed in these pages an opinion that emigration is the greatest of all remedies, the divinely-appointed remedy for the evils of our social state. The great vessels which are now lying useless could not be more profitably employed than in conveying emigrants, and Government might act more justly in giving loans to honest emigrants than to disloyal Irishmen. One of the most admirable and useful books connected with the great subject of the day is Mr. Fox Bourne's work on 'Our Colonies and Emigration.'† He brings together at one glance a full view of all our colonies, and adds tables that are replete with necessary information. The book will be highly useful to the intending emigrant and to all who take a patriotic interest in these imperial questions. The literary merit of the work is very considerable. It is a companion volume to Sir Charles Dilke's work, and within a narrower compass possesses greater completeness.

We have met with two admirable books on language, to the scope of which it is extremely difficult to do justice within our narrow limits, but which we would not willingly leave unmentioned. Each book has apparently a simple and humble aim, but it would be difficult to overrate the manifest utility of each. When Dr. Arnold was once appointing a Lower Master at Rugby, he

* 'The History of the Norman Conquest of England, the Causes and its Results.' By Edward A. Freeman, M.A. Vol. III. Oxford: at the Clarendon Press.

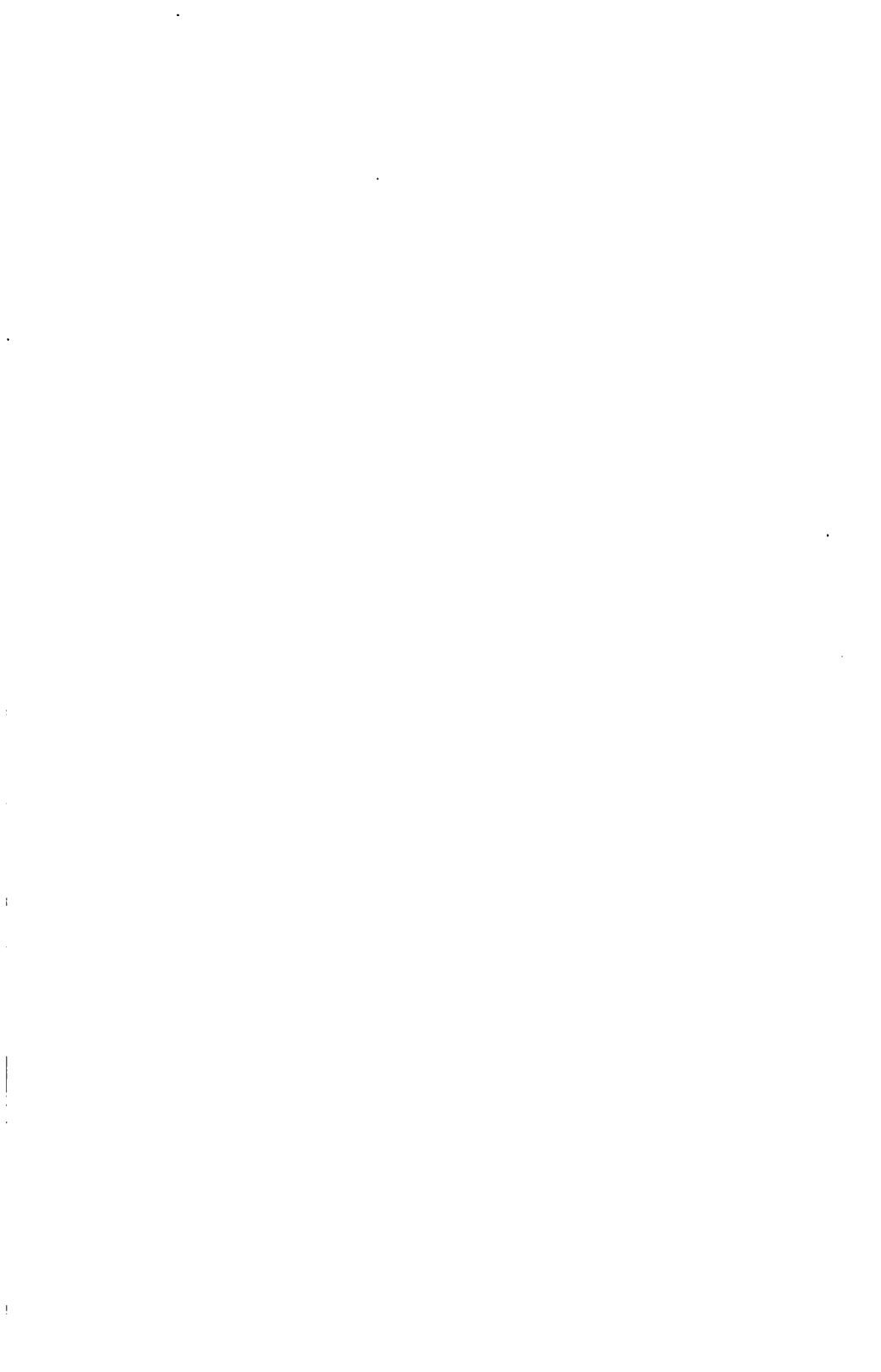
† 'The Story of our Colonies: with Sketches of their Present Condition.' By H. R. Fox Bourne. London: James Hogg and Son.





W. L. Thomas

SPRING-TIME



thought at first that a man of low attainments would do; but he reviewed his opinion, and said he must have a learned man to teach a simple subject well. You may detect a scholar even when he is teaching a simple subject simply, just as a mere note is often sufficient to show much of a man's tone and character. We can testify, both of Mr. de Levante and of Mr. Hood, that they are capable of much more than such books as these. The books may be confidently recommended as of great utility. Mr. de Levante complains, with great reason, that young people are not sound in orthography and that foreigners fail in orthoepy,* that is, cannot make the English pronunciation. To all such his book will lend effectually guidance. He often reminds us of William Cobbett, who delighted to find false grammar in king's speeches or the speeches of bishops and statesmen. But bad grammar is sporadic. Cob-

* 'Orthoepy and Orthography of the English Language.' By Rev. E. R. De Levante. Longmans.

'The Rules of Rhymes: a Guide to English Versification. With a Compendious Dictionary of Rhymes.' By Tom Hood. James Hogg and Son, York Street.

bett delighted to dwell on the errors of Lindley Murray, and we may at least smile at the affected purism of Cobbett, who certainly could not understand idioms. We have looked with much pleasure through Mr. de Levante's book, and consider it a real addition to educational literature.

Mr. Tom Hood is so accomplished a master of the art of rhyme that we necessarily listen with respect to his explication of the mechanism of his art. Scattered through his book are some gems of pure criticism, as in his remarks on that rare and difficult art of song-writing, and his true notion that Moore owed much of his success this way to his musical knowledge. His work will go far to arrest what he calls the Americanising of our language. Mr. Hood is careful to explain that he is only dealing with the form of poetry, and that verse is but its A B C. But all literary excellence must be based upon that A B C.

But, as we said just now, books are multiplying very fast on us. We shall later attempt to classify them, with notices of some selected specimens.

SPRING TIME.

APPLE blossoms falling sweet
In a rosy rain,
With your breath my darling greet,
Shed a splendour for her feet
Comes she here again.

Birds that on the branches sing,
Blossom-tufts among,
Stint not in your carolling,
She should, even as the Spring,
Brim your hearts with song.

Flowers that, springing in the night,
Take the hues of morn,
Cluster round her dewy-bright,
Thrilling with a new delight
Of her coming born.

Where the branches interlace
 In a flush of green,
 Oh, to look upon her face !
 Oh, to mark her Dryad grace
 And her gracious mien !

Brighter eyes or bluer ne'er
 To the light awake ;
 And the glooms the glosses snare,
 In the ripples of her hair,
 And its glory make.

Fresher is she than the day
 When the leaves are new,
 Daintier than the buds of May,
 When the greening branches sway,
 And the buds are few.

Fall then, blooms in rosy rain,
 Birds, your sweetest sing,
 Flowers, you blossom not in vain,
 For my darling comes again—
 Comes embodied Spring !

WILLIAM SAWYER.

TURNING-POINTS IN LIFE.

ANY one who has arrived at that era of his own history in which Memory more than Hope governs the horizon of human life—who analyses the motives and muses on the events of his own life-story, and who learns to watch with intense human interest that drama of life which day by day is unfolding in all the relationships that surround him, will, I think, understand the phrase which I have set at the head of this paper, and the line of thought indicated by the phrase. But a man must have some self-knowledge, some self-insight, before he can dispassionately review his own history. A man cannot see his blunders while he is playing his game; but when the game is very nearly over he can see little else except his blunders. And yet he may have played a very fair game after all. And it is a truth in military science that no battle is fought without blunders, and the goodness of generalship practically consists in the

comparative fewness of blunders. It is very touching to see such renowned statesmen as Earl Russell and the late Sir James Graham—men who zealously contended during their political career for the absolute indefeasibility of their conduct—as the shadows darken, confess candidly the number and greatness of their blunders. And if calm, meditative introspection is rare, it is something still more difficult to understand others, to do justice to them, to 'put yourself in his place,' to forget rivalries and feuds in sympathy and appreciation. Really to do so is a mixed moral and intellectual achievement of a somewhat high order. First of all, man has the sense of novelty, the desire, ever unsatisfied, to see, or hear, or do something fresh. Then intelligent admiration succeeds the mere sense of wonder. Men desire to have a knowledge of the laws that pervade the world of matter and the world of mind around them. Then comes,

higher still, I think, in the scale, the faculty that interests man in the human interests that surround him. On the intellectual side this faculty enables him to grasp by mental acts the shifting panorama of history and the poetry and passion of life, and on the moral side it gives him sympathy and gumption, and the desire to act justly, charitably, and purely—to do all the good he can in all the ways he can to all the people he can.

Besides this conscious feeling of having blundered, and the wholesome humility such a feeling should inspire, there will ensue on any such retrospect the feeling that there have been great 'turning-points in life.' Some of these blunders will certainly be connected with some of these turning-points, and some of these turning-points will connect themselves with the very reverse of blunders, that is, with what has been best and worthiest in our imperfect lives. But many of them will be odd, strange, inexplicable. After eliminating all that can be explained as the legitimate results of certain practical lines of conduct, it is still remarkable how large a realm in human life is occupied by what is simply and absolutely fortuitous. And this presence of chance cannot really be a matter of chance. So far from that, it is, I believe, part of the constitution of things under which we live. Just as we live in an order of nature, where the seasons succeed each other, not in mere arithmetical order, but in all sweet variety, so events do not succeed each other according to a clearly-defined system of causation, but with a liability to the constant recurrence of what is accidental and fortuitous. Probably all the phenomena of human life, as of nature, are referable to law; but still it would be wearisome work to us, constituted as we are, to watch all the unvaried sequences of order. Instead of that we only vaguely see the vague skirts, the vast shadowy forms of such laws, and most things below the skies remain as uncertain, uncertified, transitory as the skies themselves. And this weird, fortuitous

realm is doubtless ordered for the best, and is no mystery to the great Lawgiver, although His laws are inexplicable to us, and are to us as confused as the rush and roar of complicated machinery when first from the sweet south we enter the grim establishments of those masterful northern manufacturers.

There, that will do! I have been as didactic and speculative as I durst, or, indeed, as I can be on these problems, which are almost as baffling to the mind as the notions of space and infinity. But as I have been speaking of the fortuitous, let us mark off clearly a set of cases peculiarly likely to be confounded with it. A man finds a watch upon the ground. This was Paley's famous illustration, which has a regular pedigree in the history of literature. You remember the story of the absurd Cambridge undergraduate who mixed up Paley's Argument of Design with the Evidences of Christianity, and commenced his examination paper with the queer hypothesis, 'If twelve men find a watch.' But, to employ this used-up teleological watch once more, it is by no means a fortuitous event, whether the man seeks to restore the watch to its owner or forthwith appropriates the same. To one man the watch will be an overmastering temptation, and he will pocket it; to another the watch will be destitute of the least power of exciting temptation, and he would immediately deposit it with the town crier. The result, in either case, is simply the result of a man's disposition, character, and antecedent history. The same sort of thing happens under much more difficult and complicated circumstances. A man makes a certain decision, and in after-life he is spoken of as having made such a very wise or unwise decision; or it is said that in a certain emergency he acted with such vigour, or promptness, or justness, or the reverse. Now what I wish to deny altogether is the apparently fortuitous character of such transactions. The whole previous life, so to speak, had been a preparation for that particular minute of momentous action. It was a sum, duly

cast up, giving the result in particular figures. The practical force of these considerations is evident. A man is dismissed his ship for drunkenness. It seems a sharp penalty. Yes, but the intoxication was not a fortuitous event. There must have been a *crucendo* series of ungentlemanly acts culminating in this punishable misdemeanour. A woman runs away with her groom; but what a progressive debasement of heart and mind there must have been before all culture and gentle associations are forgotten! A man is convicted of a criminal offence at the bar of some tribunal. There are a crowd of witnesses to character. He has not a witness who would have thought him capable of such an act. Yet his mind had been familiarised with such acts, and probably his practice with acts only just evading the character of transgression against positive law. It often happens, also, that extenuating circumstances are, in truth, aggravating circumstances. And this may suggest a consideration on the character of scruples. Bishop Temple has a sermon on the subject, and when I read it—and also when I heard it preached by one of his admirers as his own—I thought the treatment very unsatisfactory. Scruples are often tedious, tiresome things, mere matters of anise and cummin. And yet, though their absolute importance may be little, to some minds their relative importance is very great. Scruples are often the advanced outposts of conscience. Sometimes they are outposts which command the citadel. When the outposts fall, one by one, there is often no use at all in defending the city. The lines are drawn round it and it must fall. Which things are an allegory. As consequences have their antecedents, so apparently fortuitous acts have their anterior order.

When, therefore, I speak of turning-points in life I mean, first, those events which undoubtedly have a fortuitous character, though this is perhaps more apparent than real; and next, those events which, though they may seem fortuitous, are distinctly nothing of the sort; and

thirdly, those stages and crises in individual history when a man, *no- lens volens*, is obliged to take his line, and when not to take a line is the most distinct line of all, i. e., whether a man will get married, or take to a profession, or practically decides that he will not marry and will not take to a profession. In human history, from time to time, these turning-points emerge. Men tell us so, and we see it. We all know how Shakespeare says that there is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. That turning of the tide is frequently dramatic or even tragic enough. So we have heard of persons cut off by the tide and left stranded on some rock out at sea. The hungry, crawling foam reaches the feet, the knees, the loins, the breast, the lips. There is the death-agony of apprehension. Then suddenly the water recedes. It is the turn of the tide. The romance is told of such unlooked-for safety, but those erect no tablets who perish. We sometimes see something analogous to this in life. Once nothing succeeded, but now everything turns to gold. Once they drew all blanks, now the prizes are all before them. As the Yankee parson said, 'So mote it be.'

Sometimes circumstances purely fortuitous have coloured and influenced a whole lifetime. I have met with two instances of this in my reading within the last week or two. The other day I was within a magnificent library—a library that belonged to one of the greatest scholars that England has ever known. It has grown with choice accretions since it came into its present owner's hands. I took down a tall thick folio, bound in vellum—such books with such coverings its owner loved—and opened the volume of Justin Martyr, which contained the dialogue with Trypho. I read that remarkable passage in which Justin recounts to his chance companions the truest and strangest of all passages of his history. One day he had been musing on the seashore when he was accosted by an aged and benevolent stranger, who ven-

tured to ask him the nature of his meditations. Justin explained to him how he was musing on the philosophers; but his new-found companion asked him whether he knew aught about the prophets. Then ensued the conversation which determined the tenour and complexion of all Justin's future life. Perhaps some of us may have had such rare seasons of converse with gifted minds, which have been as an *open sesame*, to open up whole realms of thought and truth which otherwise might have eluded our sphere of observation. I noticed the other instance in Mrs. Gordon's interesting little book respecting her illustrious father, Sir David Brewster. On the very threshold of his great scientific researches his sight began to fail him. He had every reason to fear that his eyes must go; and in his case most earthly good would have failed with his failing vision. Then some one told him that, for such cases, the great surgeon, Sir Benjamin Brodie, recommended a particular prescription. It was a very simple one, common snuff being the chief ingredient. He took it, and was completely cured. Years after Sir David met Sir Benjamin; but Sir Benjamin was surprised at the matter, and said the prescription was none of his.

Now let us take some illustrations from life; and truly that was a true saying, that though arguments are pillars yet illustrations are the windows that let in the light.

There is no doubt but the moment in which, at a family conclave, there is a choice of school or college is a very important turning-point of life. It is remarkable on how slight a hinge the choice turns—what a slight impulse settles the question. Unfortunately the matter is often settled the wrong way. There are some boys for whom the public school is the very thing. It is especially the thing for those boys who are adapted by nature for our English public life. It develops the mind: it forms the manners: it carries the boy successfully on in his work: it surrounds him with friends who often form a phalanx

around him on whose shoulders he is carried onward to prosperity and eminence. But, on the other hand, there are boys who are peculiarly fitted for home education, or the gentlest training abroad. They have delicate flowers of character and feeling which would blossom in the shade, but are withered in the glare of sunshine. Cowper's misery at Westminster has been often reproduced in his sensitiveness, if not in his genius. I have a hearty love of Eton and Etonians. But take some obtuse youth of eighteen, who has never received the individual separate attention which he has required—who has been slowly shuffled through class after class without attaining to its level of attainment—on whom the distinctive advantages of the place have been almost altogether thrown away, and he has gained, I grant you, good manners—that is the never-failing acquisition which Eton always gives her sons—but otherwise the early years of his life have been almost irretrievably wasted. He is just the sort of man on whom careful patient training would have wrought everything that could be wrought on a poor limited nature; but now if he can get into the army or smuggled into a family living, it is the only use to which he is susceptible of being put.

Similarly as to college. A man goes to a certain college because his father was there before him, or because his uncle had a fellowship there, or because some paltry scholarship is attached to his native county. But a knowing Cambridge tutor would say, 'That is just the man for Trinity,' or a knowing Oxford tutor, 'That is just the man for Christ Church, or just the man for Balliol.' Why should you send a hard-reading man to Exeter or an indolent, dressy man to Balliol? Why should a gentleman be sent to the drinking smoking set of a 'fast,' which means a slow college? and why should not some wavering natures be developed into something better by the best collegiate influences? All over the world the square peg

goes into the round hole, and *vice versa*. There is something very odd about men at small colleges, but as the Trinity man said, according to Mr. Leslie Stephen, 'They, too, are God's creatures.' A man will go to his little college, where you might live in a university town for a dozen years without knowing, and like it, and stand up for it, and consider it the epitome of the world, as some men stand up for Christ Church or Balliol, and others for Trinity and St. John's.

Let us now look at some instances of 'turning-points' in our social life around us. In professional life we often find anecdotes of success that are very good, and, what cannot always be said of good stories, very well guaranteed. There was a London curate sitting one day in his vestry, very much after the manner of his order. These London curates are sometimes a sort of relieving officers. They often sit an hour a day in the vestry, distributing dispensary tickets or orders for soup and flannel, or writing down the names of poor people who may be in some dire distress and on whom they intend to call. If you want to have a five minutes' chat with this sort of parson you know when and where to find him. There came a tap at a certain vestry door, and the curate shouted his 'come in,' with full belief that there was another Irish pauper. A gentleman came in, who asked after the aristocratic and well-known rector. The curate explained that his rector was out of town, but that he himself would be very pleased to do anything he could for him. The gentleman hummed and hesitated, but at last explained his business. It so happened that he was the patron of a valuable living which had just fallen in, and knowing nothing about clergymen, he had called to ask the rector whether he knew any one on whom the presentation would be fittingly bestowed. The curate was no fool. A turning-point had come. He saw he had a chance, and he took it. He said there was an individual, whom modesty prevented him from naming, who was ad-

mirably qualified for a good living. The ingenuous shamefacedness was overcome, and the curate gave ample evidence that he had worked long and arduously. He dropped into a very good living, rather to the disgust of the rector, who would have liked better to have given it to some of his own belongings. I remember another lucky hit. It was that of a clergyman meeting with a Lord Chancellor. The Chancellor was not Lord Hatherley, but it was a predecessor of his in no very remote degree. The parson—he was a tutor at one of the Oxford colleges—was a very early riser, and so was the Lord Chancellor. It so happened that they were visiting together at the same country-house. They met one fresh early morning in the library when all the rest of the world was drowned in sleep. This similarity led to a long conversation, in which other similarities of taste and feeling were developed. The result was that the Lord Chancellor gave him a capital living. There is a great difference among Lord Chancellors. Such a Chancellor as Lord Westbury did not care for his small church patronage, and brought in a bill which enabled him to get rid of it. Other Chancellors, however, are truly 'grasping' about it, if one may use that unpleasant term. The fact is, Chancellors ought not to be allowed to hold ecclesiastical patronage. Livings are not the proper prizes to be given away in recollection of electioneering contests or sharp legal businesses.

The readers of those somewhat mendacious volumes Lord Campbell's 'Lives of the Lord Chancellors' will recollect the sudden, unexpected turns by which great lawyers have trod to fame and fortune. I often think of a great advocate, rising up to take advantage of his first chance; and feeling as if his wife and children were tugging at his robe and exhorting him to do his best. Then nearly every doctor in good practice has his story of days when he had no practice at all, and of the lucky incidents which brought him into the notice which he deserved. Much may be said of various

other pursuits in life. I once knew a man who got into Parliament through the simple accident of meeting a man on the steps of the Carlton Club. This man said that he was going to try for a borough on the great Buff interest, and he wanted another man, a Buff, like himself, but a better talker, to try along with him, and he would stand all the expenses. The two Buffs were duly returned. If you believe Dr. Johnson's definition of genius—I don't—that it is great natural ability accidentally turned into a particular direction, then every career of great intellectual eminence has been accidentally determined by the stress of some turning-point in life. A lucky incident determined the career of that great prelate and acute thinker, Bishop Herbert Marsh. If you don't know much about Bishop Marsh, just turn to that volume of the British Museum library where his works are enrolled; or, better still, in that learned mass of annotation with which Mr. Mayor has supplemented the publication of the Baker MS. on St. John's College. Herbert Marsh wrote German with the force and facility of a native. He published in that language, in 1800, 'The History of the Politics of Great Britain and France . . . containing a Narrative of the attempt made by the British Government to restore Peace.' This history was based on authentic documents, which showed that the French, and not the British, were the authors of the war. Its publication did our country a signal service at the time. You will still find many ignorant writers who insist that Pitt's glorious continental wars were quite a mistake, and altogether unnecessary. I would only advise them to go to their books and study the materials of authentic history. Pitt sent for Marsh, and gave him some five hundred a year until he should give him a bishopric. Another illustrious Englishman owed his fortune to that evil genius of Europe, Napoleon. When that monster of selfishness and cruelty was caged in the 'Bellerophon,' and the vessel lay in Plymouth Sound,

at the latter end of that memorable July—oh, what a midsummer was that for our England!—a young painter took boat day by day, and hovered about the vessel for every glimpse of the captive. Every evening, about six, Napoleon used to appear on the gangway and make his bow to the thousands who came out to see him. There is some reason to believe that Napoleon divined, and approved of the artist's intention. So, Charles Eastlake made a good portrait, and from it constructed a large painting of the Emperor, for which the gentlemen of Plymouth gave him a thousand pounds, and sent it to Rome, and made the fortune of the future President of the Royal Academy.

Marriage is unquestionably as decided a turning-point in human destiny as can be. It is, however, a turning-point which, least of all, should be left to mere blind chance. Yet mere blind chance often rules the result. Everybody now recollects how Lord Byron staked on a toes up whether he should make his offer to Miss Milbanke or not. Mr. Grant asserts that there is an English duke now living, who wrote the following letter, when marquis, to a friend with whom he had agreed to inspect some carriages in Long Acre: "It will not be necessary to meet me to-morrow, to go to Long Acre to look for a carriage. From a remark made by the duke [his father] to-day, I fancy I am going to be married." Not only had the marquis left his father to choose a bride for him and to make the other necessary matrimonial arrangements; but when the intimation was made to him by the duke that the future marchioness had been fixed on, he seemed to view the whole affair as if it had been one which did not concern him in the least. We have a similar anecdote of the late Duke of Sutherland: 'On the morning of the day of his marriage, a friend of his found him leaning carelessly over the railing at the edge of the water in St. James's Park, and throwing crumbs of bread to the ducks. His friend, surprised to see him at such a place, and so

engaged, within two hours of the appointed time for his marriage to one of the first women in England—one in whose veins the blood of the Howards flowed—exclaimed, "What, you here to-day! I thought you were going to be married this morning!" "Yes," was his answer, given with the most perfect *nonchalance*, and throwing a few more crumbs to the ducks, without moving from the railing on which he was leaning—"yes, I believe I am." I should hope that sensible men do not often leave the choice of a wife to be determined in this indeterminate way. Nor yet, I hope, for the matter of that, the choice of a profession—more especially if that profession is the Church. I see that a set of gentlemen are now trying, vehemently, to release themselves from the shackles of their ordination vows. They say, in effect, that they were young; that they were inexperienced; that they have seen what they have liked better; that they ought to have the liberty of another choice. I offer no opinion on this reasoning. But it is worth while to point out that every one of these considerations would equally apply to a claim to be released from marriage. Milton set forth the whole claim in his 'Tetrachordon.' Yet this is a length to which any legislature would decline to go.

Every now and then, in history, or in the history of literature and science, we find some striking historical instance of turning-points in life. On such ground we see how a scandal about a bracelet, or the prohibition of a banquet, wrought a revolution, and precipitated a dynasty. Look at literary or scientific biography. Think of Crabbe's timorously calling on Edmund Burke, and inducing him to look at his poetry. I have no doubt but Burke was very busy. But with lightning glance he looked over the lines, and satisfied himself that real genius was there. When Crabbe left the statesman, he was a made man. Burke, ever generous and enlightened, had made up his mind to take care of him. Or look at Faraday. He was only a poor bookseller's poor boy, working hard and honestly, but disliking his

employment and inspired with a pure thirst for knowledge. He had managed, somehow or other, to hear the great chemist, Humphry Davy, at the Royal Institution; and, with trembling solicitude, he sends him a fair copy of the notes which he had made of his lectures. The result is that Michael Faraday receives an appointment at the Royal Institution, and lays the foundation of his splendid and beneficent career. Looking back to the past, that was a great moment in the life of Columbus, when, resting on a sultry day beneath the fierce Spanish sun, he asked for a drink of cold water at a convent door. The prior entered into a conversation with him, and—struck by his appearance, and afterwards by the magnificent simplicity of his ideas—gave him the introductions he so sorely needed; and thus Columbus gave to Castile and Aragon a new world.

And greater than any merely national event of outward honour and importance, a more wondrous turning-point in life, is that when some great thought, some great discovery has first loomed distinctly before the mind. One of Mr. Hugh Macmillan's admirable works reminds us of such a 'moment.' Seventeen years ago, late one afternoon, a hunter, led by the chase, came to a secluded spot in a forest on a slope, four thousand feet high, of the range of the Sierra Nevada. There, to his astonishment, he beheld vast dark-red trunks of trees rising for three or four hundred feet in the air, dwarfing all the surrounding forest, whose tops were still aglow in the sunset when darkness had fallen on all meaner growths. Thus was discovered the *Wellingtonia gigantea* of California, the most splendid addition of this generation to natural history. You may walk, you may even ride on horseback through the trunk of a fallen tree. Those alive are between two and three thousand years old, and those prostrate may have lain for thousands of years and have been thousands of years old when they fell. The huntsman who first beheld them hastened away, as one enchanted, to tell the marvellous story, and was not believed

until repeated visits and measurements had been made. There is an eminent American writer who considers that there are two moments which stand pre-eminent in the intellectual history of our race. One of them was when Galileo for the first time looked through the first telescope, and the phases of Venus and the moons of Jupiter whispered to him the idea of myriad space peopled with myriads of worlds like our own. A second such 'moment' was, when a large quantity of fossil bones and shells was placed before the aged Buffon for inspection. To his amazement he found that these remains corresponded with no known remains of living creatures of the earth. In a moment there came before the old man's mind the vast idea of infinite time, peopled with other creations besides our own. 'Filled with awe, the old man, then over eighty years of age, published his discovery. In a kind of sacred frenzy, he spoke of the magnificence of the prospect, and prophesied of the future glories of the new science, which he was, alas! too old to pursue.' Only the other day we had a splendid scientific generalization, which Mr. Charles Kingsley thinks will work a new era in biogeology. Dr. Carpenter in his 'Report of the Dredging Operations of the "Lightning,"' says that 'The globeigerina mud is not merely a chalk formation, but a continuation of the chalk formation; so that we may be said to be still living in the age of chalk.' Yes, layer by layer, the live atomies are laying the floorings of a new continent, which we shall not see. It is a sublime thought. Perhaps still more interesting are his discoveries of abundance of active life far down in depths where all the philosophers had considered that life was impossible, thus checking the seemingly most final and authoritative decisions of science. Well, the philosopher may take a lesson, may take to heart the first and humblest lesson of science, to look on all opinions as in solution, all hypotheses as tentative; and if some of our scientific luminaries become a little more modest and a little less dogmatic, it

will be a wonderful era in their own lives and a special blessing to the next meeting of the British Association.

Then accidents are turning-points, which may bring you to a sudden pause—to a dead wall. There are many accidents, fatal accidents, which, humanly speaking, might be avoided by taking things quietly. For instance, I almost wish we had a statistical account of the number of people who have dropped down dead through running to catch the train. I saw in a provincial paper the other day a very queer account of a man attending his own inquest! A coroner's jury had been summoned to hold an inquiry respecting the end of some deceased person. One of the jurymen so summoned was rather late. He and his fellow-jurors were to meet at a public-house. From the door of the hostel they watched him hastening very fast and presently running. Suddenly he dropped. They hastened to him, but found that life was altogether extinct. The coroner, a shrewd, busy man, suggested that as they were all there it would be as well if they empanelled another jurymen and held both inquests at the same sitting. This was done; and within an hour or two of the poor fellow's proceeding to attend the inquest, an inquest was held upon himself.

Then as to the morality of our theme. It was an old Greek Sophist, Prodicus by name, one of a body whom we think, despite Mr. Grote, to be justly enough abused, who gave us—Xenophon tells the story—that beautiful fable of the Choice of Hercules, which has been repeated in many forms and in many languages. It has been beautifully reproduced by Mr. Tennyson, when Ione Eune tells 'many-fountained Ida' of the choice of Paris, when he turned away from Athéné with her wisdom to Aphrodité with her love. Pythagoras took the letter Y as the symbol of human life:

'Et tibi, quæ Samios duxit litera ramos.

PENARUS

The stem of the letter denoted that

part of human life during which character is still unformed; the right-hand branch, the finer of the two, represents the path of virtue, the other that of vice. As one of the commentators says, 'The fancy took mightily with the ancients.' There is a clearly-defined turning-point in life for you! Of such 'turning-points' I have here endeavoured to give some sort of *rationale*. My thesis is that most of them are to be

eliminated from the catalogue of the contingent and the accidental, as being the legitimate effect and product of character; and, next, admitting the existence of what is fortuitous, I argue that the presence of chance is not a matter of chance, but designed by the great Artist who builds up individual life, and weaves it into the common warp and woof of all human life around us.

F. ARNOLD.



A BROTHERLY RECOGNITION.

SKETCHED AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS BY E. E. DOWNARD.

LONDON SOCIETY.

MAY, 1870.



A SPRING DAY.

STUDIES IN THE FIELD OF 'VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ.'

IT is to be regretted that we have no English equivalent for the term *vers de société*. The impression which the French title conveys is in nine cases out of ten an erroneous one. People are apt to suppose such verses to be simply pretty jingles for fashionable circles, like pages of the 'Book of Etiquette' turned into rhyme.

It appears to me that 'society' in this connection is not society as opposed to the million, but society as opposed to solitude. Such 'society-verse,' then, as we are here considering belongs to social everyday life, and is written by, and written for,

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men of the world. It is rather the elegant and polished treatment of some topic of interest than the lofty and removed contemplation of some extensive theme. Isaac Disraeli says: 'These productions are more the effusions of taste than genius, and it is not sufficient that the writer is inspired by the Muse; he must also suffer his concise page to be polished by the hand of the Graces.' In other words, the author of *vers de société* needs not necessarily to be a poet. Indeed, we may go so far as to say that not all poets can write *vers de société*.

There is, in truth, as much diffi-

culty in finding a good definition of this style of verse as there is in finding it an English name. Disraeli, who, in his 'Miscellanies,' has some interesting observations on *vers de société*, seems to give too much prominence to the 'society' as 'elegant society.' A reviewer in the 'Times,' some of whose remarks will be quoted anon, appears to fall into the same error. Mr. Walter Thornbury strikes the same false note in his preface to 'Two Centuries of Song.' He goes even further, perhaps; for he speaks of such verses as album verses!

It is to Mr. Frederick Locker, one of the most facile of modern writers of *vers de société*, that we must turn for the best definition of the style, in which he so excels. In his preface to the 'Lyra Elegantiarum'—to which let me hasten to acknowledge how much I am indebted in this paper—Mr. Locker says *vers de société* needs by no means to be confined to topics of artificial life. 'Subjects of the most exalted and of the most trivial character may be treated with equal success, provided the manner of their treatment is in accordance with the following characteristics, which the editor ventures to submit as expressive of his own ideas on the subject. In his judgment, genuine *vers de société* and *vers d'occasion* should be short, elegant, refined, and fanciful, not seldom distinguished by chastened sentiment, and often playful. The tone should not be pitched high, it should be idiomatic, and rather in the conversational key; the rhythm should be crisp and sparkling, and the rhyme frequent and never forced; while the entire poem should be marked by tasteful moderation, high finish, and completeness; for however trivial the subject-matter may be—indeed, rather in proportion to its triviality—subordination to the rules of composition and perfection of execution should be strictly enforced.'

Mr. Locker illustrates his definition by giving examples of pieces which, though they bear a certain generic resemblance to *vers de société*, yet, from the absence or from the excess of some of the qualities

enumerated, are excluded from his selection. He then adds that 'the poem may be tintured with a well-bred philosophy, it may be gay and gallant, it may be playfully malicious or tenderly ironical, it may display lively banter, and it may be satirically facetious—it may even, considering it merely as a work of art, be pagan in its philosophy or trifling in its tone, but it must never be ponderous or commonplace.'

The two qualities, finally, which Mr. Locker considers absolutely essential are 'brevity and buoyancy.' If I may be allowed to add another essential, we shall have, I think, 'the three b's' of this school of verse, to pair off with Lord Palmerston's famous 'three r's' of education. To my thinking, 'brevity, buoyancy, and brilliancy' constitute the essence of this species of poetry.

It is one of the incidental characteristics of such verse that the writer talks familiarly in *propria persona* with his public, 'delineates himself,' as Disraeli says, 'and reflects his tastes, his desires, his humours, his amours, and even his defects.' The 'Times' reviewer, alluded to above, gives the reason of another characteristic—the light-some tone of the writers of *vers de société*. 'Theirs,' he says, 'is the poetry of bitter-sweet, of sentiment that breaks into humour, and of solemn thought, which, lest it should be too solemn, plunges into laughter. . . . When society becomes refined, it begins to dread the exhibition of strong feeling, no matter whether real or simulated.'

. . . In such an atmosphere emotion takes refuge in jest, and passion hides itself in scepticism of passion.

. . . In the poets who represent this social mood there is a delicious piquancy, and the way they play bo-peep with their feelings makes them a class by themselves.'

To search for a parallel in another style, we must take, I think, the Essay as used by Steele, by Addison, by Goldsmith, by Lamb, and by Thackeray. It is the prose, as the other is the verse of the world—in the better sense of the word as meaning human life. There is some-

thing nearly allied to the peculiar frame of mind needed in the writer of *vers de société*, in the mood of the essayist, who, like Thackeray, laughs over some things because he does not want you to notice that he is crying. It is the fashion to describe this manly shame for the display of the tender emotions as Cynicism. If the nickname be justly applied (and it is but rarely that nicknames are justly applied), I am afraid we shall have to admit that when we have concentrated the very essence of *vers de société*, it will have to come under some of those mysterious chemical formulæ of C O and H, with a preponderance of power in the symbol representing the acid society pleases to call Cynicism.

The truth is the writer of *vers de société* may as well at once adopt the hackneyed motto—seldom correctly quoted by the way—*Homo sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto*. He is not singing at the top of Parnassus to an audience too far below him to be seen. He is singing by the wayside, by the fireside—in the 'gilded saloon,' if you choose, and not from the dais, but an ordinary drawing-room chair. He can no more think of assuming the airs of a poet than he would of going to an evening party in a laurel-wreath. He must sing like a man, with the natural shrinking of a man from the exposure of his tenderness, his grief, his love, his folly to the eyes of his neighbours.

Such a man's poetry is essentially human. There is little of what the old poets called 'the divine *afflatus*' about it. It is a bright spark struck out, in passing, from some flint in the hard road of every-day life by the rapid hoof of Pegasus, rather than the glow which attends the forging of his shoes under the superintendence of Apollo and the nine Muses.

There being so much human nature in this species of poetry, it is almost useless to attempt to give the date of its birth. Mr. Thornbury thinks that we owe it to the French, and that it was introduced by those exiles who returned with Charles from Breda. Now, al-

though it be true that courtier-poets of the Waller type especially studied 'the mere coloured subtleties of fancy marqueterie,' the Elizabethan poets and their predecessors found time for lighter tasks than 'toiling at the forges of thought,' and there is no very strong reason for drawing the frontier-line of *vers de société* at 1660. Not to mention Lydgate's 'London Lyckpenny,' Dunbar's 'Discretion in Giving and Taking,' we have admirable examples of *vers de société* in Skelton's 'Merry Margaret,'* and in several pieces written by the unfortunate Earl of Surrey. Raleigh, Marlowe, Sylvester, Wotton, Donne, Jonson, and our great Shakespeare himself, have all contributed to our treasury of such poetry. In 'My flocks feed not,' and in 'Under the Greenwood Tree,' Shakespeare offers us models for this class of composition. Though they have not all succeeded, most of our great poets have at some time or another essayed this style. Even the gravest

* As one of the earliest instances of this kind of verse, I quote it:—

'TO MISTRESS MARGARET HUSSEY.']

'Merry Margaret,
As Midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower;
With solace and gladness;
Much mirth and no madness,
All good and no badness,
So joyously,
So maidenly,
So womanly,
Her demeaning
In everything,
Far, far passing,
That I can indite,
Or suffice to write
Of merry Margaret,
As Midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower;
As patient and still,
And as full of good will,
As fair Isiphil,
Colander,
Sweet Pomander,
Good Cassander;
Steadfast of thought,
Well-made, well-wrought.
Far may be sought,
Ere you can find
So courteous, so kind,
As merry Margaret,
This Midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon
Or hawk of the tower.'

of them have acted on the maxim, '*Non semper arcum tendit Apollo*;' and Milton, besides some Horatian adaptations which would fairly come under this head, fulfilled all the requirements of *vers de société* in his lines written 'when the assault was intended to the city.'*

The quotation I have just made reminds me that the origin of *vers de société* dates from times long antecedent, not only to the Restoration, but to the existence of the French nation, to whom Mr. Thornbury considers we owe the school. In the illustrious company of writers of *vers de société*, one of the highest places of honour must be reserved for Horace.

Horace is really the father of *vers de société* so far as we know its history. Anacreon is the only other claimant that we can recognise; but his claims are barred by the narrowness of the 'society' for which he wrote. Even as rendered with a modern disguise by Moore, he lacks the catholicity of human interest which makes Horace the pocket-companion of so many.

Take that well-known ode 'Integer Vitæ' for an example, and you will see at once that, *mutatis mutandis*, that is to say, altering the local colour of a few allusions—it is as true to the humanity of to-day as to that of the Augustan epoch:

* Cowper, in his *vers de société*, flings off his grave melancholy most noticeably, and can make even his serious philosophy smile; witness the last verses of 'The Jackdaw':—

'He sees that this great roundabout,
The world, with all his motley 'rout,
Church, army, physic, law,
Its custom and its businesses,
Is no concern at all of his,
And says—what says he?—Caw!

'Thrice happy bird! I too have seen
Much of the vanities of men,
And, sick of having seen 'em,
Would cheerfully these limbs resign
For such a pair of wings as thine,
And such a head between 'em.'

In 'The Colubriad' he is even more more sprightly. The last couplet is very comic.

'With outstretched hoe I slew him at the door,
And taught him never to come there no more.'

'Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus,
Non eget Mauris jaculis, neque arcu,
Nec venenatis gravida sagittis,
Fusce, phœtra:
Sive per Syrias iter astuosas,
Sive facturus per inhospitalem
Caucasum, vel quæ loca fabulosæ
Lambit Hydæspes.

'Namque me alivâ lupus in Sabina,
Dum meam canto Lalagen, et ultra
Terminum curis vagor expeditis,
Fugit inermem.
Quale portentum neque militaris
Dauntis latæ alit æsculetis,
Nec Juba tellus generat, leonum
Arida nutrix.

'Pone me, pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstivâ recreatur aurâ;
Quod latus mundi nebulae malinæque
Jupiter arguet:
Pone sub curru nimium propinqui
Solis, in terrâ domibus negatâ;
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem.'

I venture to give rather a modern paraphrase than a translation of this exquisite Ode, because, with all its faults, I trust the version will show that the sentiment, nay, even the allusions, with some modification, belong not to Horace's age but to all the time which society may claim:—

'Dear Brown, the man with conscience pure,
Who never bubble-schemes promoted,
Needs no six-shooter to secure
His peace—an armament too bloated!—
Whether for autumn's trip a yacht
He should on stormy seas commission,
Or spend it in Italian grot—
Prey to the bandits of tradition.

'For I, who, chanting Lily's name,
Was wandering round my house in Surrey,
By chance beyond my meadows came
On Jobson's bull—in such a flurry!
A fiercer beast ne'er Smithfield knew,
Nor Spanish matador bestraddled,
There's naught so savage in the Zoo,
But—hearing me—the bull akedaddled!

'So, place me on the polar heights,
Where not a tree the landscape varies;
Where northern lights, and month-long nights,
Fling the poor traveller in quandaries;
Or place me in the torrid zone,
Where Phœbus' heat is simply br'ling.
I still will Lily sing—my own,
So softly speaking, sweetly smiling.'

This is but a rude attempt to convey the *badinage* of the original. A better example is afforded by Thackeray's rendering of 'Persicos Odi,' but I selected this Ode to

prove that the allusions, so plentiful in this instance, are always commutable. Thackeray's version is perfect:—

'TO HIS SERVING BOY.'

'Periculis odi,
Puer, apparatus;
Displicent nexæ
Philyræ coronæ:
Mitte sectari,
Rosa quo locorum
Sera moretur.

'Simplici myrto
Nihil allabores
Sedulus curas:
Neque te ministrum
Dedecet myrtus,
Neque me sub arcib;
Vile bibentem.'

'AD MINISTRAM.'

'Dear Lucy, you know what my wish is,—
I hate all your Frenchified fous;
Your silly entrées and made dishes
Were never intended for us.
No footman in lace and in ruffles
Need dangle behind my arm-chair;
And never mind seeking for truffles,
Although they be ever so rare.

'But a plain leg of mutton, my Lucy,
I prythee get ready at three:
Have it smoking, and tender, and juicy,
And what better meat can there be?
And when it has feasted the master,
'Twill amply suffice for the maid;
Meanwhile I will smoke my canister,
And tiddle my ale in the shade.'

Dating from Horace's time, the muster-roll of writers of *vers de société* has been a long and brilliant one, numbering many a famous name from among the most distinguished of every country.

In that brilliant assemblage, besides those I have already spoken of, will be present the laurelled shades of Herrick,* Suckling, Sedley,

* It may not be out of place to give a characteristic bit of the rollicking divine's writing. Were it not so well known, 'The Night Piece to Julia' should appear here. But this is very neat.

'TO HIS MISTRESS OBJECTING TO HIS
NEITHER TOYING NOR TALKING.

'You say I love not, 'cause I do not play
Still with your curls, and kiss the time away.
You blame me, too, because I can't devise
Some sport, to please those babies in your eyes;
By Love's religion, I must here confess it,
The most I love when I the least express it.

Oldys, Spenser, Cowley, Congreve, Swift, Prior, Gray, Goldsmith,* and many others. Nor will there be a lack of lords among the wits; for Rochester, Buckingham, Dorset, and, as I have already said, Surrey (to mention only a few nobles), all of them earned laurel chaplets, as well as inherited gold coronets.

Among our modern poets, Colman, Moore, the brothers Smith, Haynes Bayly, Thomas Hood, Barham, Leigh Hunt, Aytoun, Præd, and Thackeray at once suggest

Some griefs find tongues; full casks are ever found'

To give, if any, yet but little sound.
Deep waters noiseless are; but this we know,
That chiding streams betray small depths below.

So when Love speechless is, he doth express
A depth in love, and that depth bottomless.
Now since my love is tongueless, know me such,
Who speak but little, 'cause I love so much.'
ROBERT HERRICK.

* We give an example of Goldsmith's neatest essay in this style, the whole of which (though a few lines are common quotations) is not familiar.

'AN ELEGY ON THE GLORY OF HER SEX,

'MRS. MARY BLAKE.

'Good people all, with one accord,
Lament for Madame Blaize,
Who never wanted a good word—
From those who spoke her praise.

'The needy seldom pass'd her door,
And always found her kind;
She freely lent to all the poor—
Who left a pledge behind.

'She strove the neighbourhood to please,
With manners wondrous winning;
And never follow'd wicked ways—
Unless she was a-sinning.

'At church in silks and satins new,
With hoop of monstrous size;
She never slumber'd in her pew—
But when she shut her eyes.

'Her love was sought, I do aver,
By twenty beaux or more;
The king himself has follow'd her—
When she has walked before.

'But now her wealth and finery fled,
Her hangers-on cut short all;
Her doctors found when she was dead—
Her last disorder mortal.

'Let us lament, in sorrow sore,
For Kent Street well may say;
That had she liv'd a twelvemonth more—
She had not died to-day.'

themselves as writers of *vers de société* of the highest order. My list, however, must be considered as far from exhaustive. But what a store of gems the mention of these names recalls! What could be more delightful than the tender humour of Thackeray's 'Cane-bottomed Chair'? 'The Ballad of Bonillabaisse' and 'The Pen and the Album' are perfect. Could anything be better than 'The Age of Wisdom' or 'Sorrows of Werther'?

'THE AGE OF WISDOM.'

'Ho, pretty page, with the dimpled chin,
That never has known the barber's shear,
All your wish is woman to win,
This is the way that boys begin—
Wait till you come to forty year.

'Curly gold locks cover foolish brains,
Billings and cooing is all your cheer;
Sighing and singing of midnight strains,
Under Bonnybell's window panes—
Wait till you come to forty year!

'Forty times over let Michaelmas pass,
Grizzling hair the brain doth clear—
Then you know a boy is an ass,
Then you know the worth of a lass,
Once you have come to forty year.

'Pledge me round, I bid ye declare,
All good fellows whose beards are grey,
Did not the fairest of the fair
Common grow and wearisome ere
Ever a month was past away?

'The roddest lips that ever have kissed,
The brightest eyes that ever have shone,
May pray and whisper, and we not list,
Or look away, and never be misad,
Ere yet ever a month is gone.

'Gillian's dead, God rest her bier,
How I loved her twenty years syne!
Marian's married, but I sit here,
Alone and merry at forty year,
Dipping my nose in the Gascon wine.'

'SORROWS OF WERTHER.'

'Werther had a love for Charlotte
Such as words could never utter;
Would you know how first he met her
She was cutting bread and butter.

'Charlotte was a married lady,
And a moral man was Werther,
And, for all the wealth of Indies,
Would do nothing for to hurt her.

'So he sighed and pined and ogled,
And his passion boiled and bubbled,
Till he blew his silly brains out,
And no more was by it troubled.

'Charlotte, having seen his body
Borne before her on a shutter,
Like a well-conducted person,
Went on cutting bread and butter.'

It would appear that the utmost length recognised for *vers de société* is about a hundred lines. Præd, whose influence over English *vers de société* is all-powerful, will be found very particular on this point. His longest pieces seldom contain more than thirteen of those eight-line verses, which many of our modern writers seem to think the only form for society-verses. But for the limit of length, thus authoritatively laid down, I should be inclined to rule that no collection of *vers de société* is complete without Thackeray's 'King of Brentford's Testament.' No such collection is complete without Leigh Hunt's exquisite 'Rondeau,' against which length, at any rate, cannot be urged as a reason for exclusion:—

'Jenny kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief! who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in.
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have missed me;
Say I'm growing old, but add—
Jenny kissed me!

Not far from this must rank Shelley's 'Love's Philosophy':

'The fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single,
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle—
Why not I with thine?

'See, the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother:

* The 'Rondeau' is a form especially adapted for such elegant versification as that under consideration. Mr. Charles Kent has written one which may well take its place here:—

'Round her slender waist a garland,
Woven in frolic, Lillan wound;
Sweet blush-rose and sweeter jasmine
In the coil alternate bound.
Sauntering 'midst the blooming thickets,
Trained for timorous love's retreat,
With the calm blue heavens above us,
And the green grass at our feet,—
Better thus, said I, the garland
O'er my Lillan's brow be placed,
While a loving arm creeps fondly
Round her slender waist.'

And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea—
What are all these kissings worth
If thou kiss not me?

Barham's best *vers de société* will be found in 'My Letter,' 'The Poplar,' and some lines written at Hook's. But the following is not a bad brief example:—

'What Horace says is
Eheu fugaces
Anni labuntur, Postume, Postume!
Years glide away, and are lost to me—lost to me!
Now when the folks in the dance sport their merry toes,
Taglioni and Ellsiers, Duvernays and Certors,
Siglugs, I murmured, "*Oh mihi pretiaritos!*"

In running over any collection of our *vers de société*, the reader will observe that Horace supplies the text and much of the matter of many pieces, a fact which will lend support, if support be needed, to the claim I have put forward on his behalf as the classical ancestor of the school.

Before noticing our living writers of *vers de société*, it will be well to speak of Praed, who, as I have observed, has exerted a remarkable influence over them. His masterpiece is, I am inclined to think, 'The Vicar,' in which, under all the surface of badinage and sly satire, there lie a gentle philosophy and a touching pathos. What can be more delicate than these stanzas?—

'And he was kind, and loved to sit
In the low hut or garnished cottage,
And praise the farmer's homely wit,
And share the widow's homelier pottage.
At his approach complaint grew mild,
And when his hand unbarr'd the shutter,
The clammy lips of fever smiled
The welcome which they could not utter.

* Sit in the Vicar's seat: you'll hear
The doctrine of a gentle Johnban,
Whose hand is white, whose tone is clear,
Whose phrase is very Ciceroian.
Where is the old man laid? Look down,
And construe on the slab before you,

"*Hic jacet Gulielmus Brown,*
Vix nullâ non donandus laurus."

* The generality of readers I find too often carelessly miss the delicate elegance of the construction '*nullâ non donandus*,' and render it 'here lies one who was never crowned with laurel,' instead of 'who deserved almost all conceivable

In Praed we find an instance of the rule that the writer of *vers de société* is not necessarily a poet. It seems hard to deny to him a name which he so nearly earns, but which he never really attains. He is a butterfly among the bards, as all must be who devote themselves entirely to the fascinating art wherein 'brevity, buoyancy, and brilliancy' are the chief requisites.

Of the living school of writers of *vers de société*, Mr. Locker must be admitted to hold a place in the foremost rank. He is, indeed, a master of the art, and endowed by nature with the wit, fancy, and feeling without which a mere knowledge of the method would be a *caput mortuum*. Here is an example of his tender mood:—

'A WISH.

'To the south of the church, and beneath yonder yew,
A pair of child-lovers I've seen;
More than once were they there, and the years of the two
When added might number thirteen.
'They sat on the grave that has never a stone
The name of the dead to determine;
It was Life paying Death a brief visit—alone
A notable text for a sermon.
'They tenderly prattled; what was it they said?
The turf on that hillock was new;
Dear little ones, did you know aught of the dead,
Or could he be heedful of you?
'I wish to believe—and believe it I must—
Her father beneath them was laid:
I wish to believe—I will take it on trust—
That father knew all that they said.
'My own, you are five, very nearly the age
Of that poor little fatherless child;
And some day a true lover your heart will engage
When on earth I my last may have smiled.
'Then visit my grave like a good little lass,
Where'er it may happen to be;
And if any daisies shall peer through the grass,
Be sure they are kisses from me.'

Of his more playful mood, 'Cir-

laurels.' The following translation has only one merit, that of preserving the original metre and rhyme for non-Latinists—

'Where you are lying, William Brown,
What laurels should not gather o'er you'

circumstance' is an admirable example.

Mr. C. S. Calverley is another who has distinguished himself in this class of composition, as has Mr. Mortimer Collins, whose 'Summer is sweet' is an exquisite poem. Mr. Godfrey Turner's 'Temple Fountain' would be enough, had he never written anything else of the sort, to win him a place in the record. Mr. Henry S. Leigh has also, in a short space of time, achieved a well-deserved reputation. The publication of his 'Carols of Cockayne' establishes that reputation, and adds a welcome volume to the collection of the amateurs of *vers de société*. I know of few neater lines than the sixth of the second stanza of the following poem:—

'WISDOM AND WATER.

Fields are green in the early light,
When Morning treads on the skirts of Night:
Fields are gray when the sun's gone west,
Like a clerk from the City in search of rest.
"Fieah," they tell us, "is only grass;"
And that is the reason it comes to pass
That mortals change in a life's long day
From the young and green to the old and gray.

'Not long since—as it seems to me—
I was as youthful as youth could be:
Cramming my noddle, as young folks do,
With a thousand things more nice than true.
Now this noddle of mine looks strange,
With its plenty of silver—and no small
change!
Surely I came the swiftest way
From the young and green to the old and gray.

'Though the day be a changeful thing
In winter and summer, autumn and spring;
Days in December and days in June
Both seem finished a deal too soon.
Twilight shadows come closing in,
And the calmest, placidest hours begin:
The closing scenes of the piece we play
From the young and green to the old and gray.'

The preference of the present age to the Golden Age is ingeniously expressed in the next extract, and is an unexpected and novel turn:—

'THE TWO AGES.

'Folks were happy as days were long
In the old Arcadian times;
When life seemed only a dance and song
In the sweetest of all sweet climes.
Our world grows bigger, and, stage by stage,
As the pitiless years have rolled,
We've quite forgotten the Golden Age,
And come to the Age of Gold.'

'Time went by in a sheepish way
Upon Thomsen's plains of yore.
In the nineteenth century lambs at play,
Mean mutton, and nothing more.
Our swains at present are far too sage
To live as one lived of old:
So they couple the crook of the Golden Age
With a hook in the Age of Gold.

'From Corydon's reed the mountains round
Heard news of his latest flame;
And Tityrus made the woods resound
With echoes of Daphne's name.
They kindly left us a lasting gauge
Of their musical art, we're told;
And the Pandean pipe of the Golden Age
Brings mirth to the Age of Gold.

'Dwellers in huts and in marble halls—
From shepherdess up to queen—
Cared little for bonnets, and less for shawls,
And nothing for crimoline.
But now simplicity's not the rage,
And it's funny to think how cold
The dress they wore in the Golden Age
Would seem in the Age of Gold.

'Electric telegraphs, printing, gas,
Tobacco, balloons, and steam,
Are little events that have come to pass
Since the days of that old régime.
And, spite of Lemprière's darning page,
I'd give—though it might seem bold—
A hundred years of the Golden Age
For a year of the Age of Gold.'

One very important characteristic of Mr. Leigh's verse is the frequency and accuracy of his rhyming. In his definition of *vers de société*, Mr. Locker insists that the rhyme should be 'frequent and never forced,' and urges it because, 'however trivial the subject-matter may be—indeed, rather in proportion to its triviality—subordination to the rules of composition and perfection of execution should be strictly enforced.'

It would be a happy day for English literature if this law were but enforced. In these times of innumerable periodicals, when every man thinks himself a poet who can write four more or less halting lines with only two 'rhymes' among them—and those rhymes more often cockney rhymes than not—it becomes a matter of vital importance that those who have the interest of literature at heart should fight a good fight for purity. In comic verse, and especially in burlesque, we are constantly meeting with 'rhymes' that grate on a sensitive ear like a discord in music. We are told that they are good enough

for comic verse—in proportion to the triviality, of which, however, 'perfection of execution should be strictly enforced.' Perfection is absolute, and he who, instead of striving for it, is content to write slipshod verse, must also be content to rank with the negro melodist who fancies he has a correct couplet in

'Tapioca, tapioca,
Hit him in the eye with a crowbar!'

We have little poetry in the present day, but the art of writing *vers de société* is widely cultivated. It would be well if all those who have influence in the matter would insist upon 'subordination to the rules of composition and perfection of execution'—a law laid down by one of the masters of the art.

Before concluding this paper on *vers de société*, it may be as well, after having said all I have to say in its praise, to explain where I fear it has injured literature.

With a multiplication of channels for publication, and with large reductions in the cost of bringing out books, the increased production of volumes of so-called 'Poems' by everybody from A to Z has become alarming, especially when on good authority we learn that the present age is to be credited with less real poetry than any of its predecessors. I fear that every young gentleman who has chanced to write a good copy of *vers de société*—by which I mean 'good' as judged by the audience to whom it was submitted—has somehow fallen into the error that it therefore behoves him to publish a volume of 'Poems.' And what renders this infliction more sad is that the majority of people are satisfied that all verse is poetry, without having the most rudimen-

tary knowledge of the rules of verse, or the faintest appreciation of the genius of poetry. In the interest of poetry I venture to appeal to the only people who can stamp out this disorder—the critics of the press. Having not sufficient time carefully to weigh the merits of every claimant for the bays, they prefer, in the kindness of their hearts, to 'let down easily;' and thus it is that their 'favourable notices' are appended by the dozen to every volume of doggerel that can find a publisher. If they would but reflect that—supposing those notices to be of any real value—we have, according to their account, more true poets in this age (so singularly destitute of poetic genius) than in any preceding time, they would, I think, see the justice—to all concerned—of 'letting down easily' by absolute silence. This may be a transgression beyond the limits of my subject; but as it was suggested by that subject, and I honestly believe points to a very serious question, I trust it may be pardoned.

This paper would not be complete without some mention of the American writers who excel in *vers de société*. Dr. Wendell Holmes is pronounced by Mr. Locker to be perhaps the best living writer of this species of verse. Willis must also have a place in the roll, and so must John Godfrey Saxe and Lowell. When I have mentioned these, I feel I have omitted other names that should be recorded; and, glancing back, I see that I have not named Morris or Prout, Lover or Laman Blanchard, Macaulay or Barry Cornwall. I trust, however, that I have given an indicative sketch of the history and nature of *vers de société*.

TOM HOOD.



MY FIRST BRIEF.

A Tale of Quarter Sessions.

I HAD at last been called to the bar. I had duly ate my way to the profession, sincerely hoping that the profession would give me something to eat. I had paid the fees, which came heavy for one of my slender patrimony, also fees for legal tuition, which came heavier still. I had rooms in Foolscep Court, Temple—not rooms such as lots of fellows have, which are perfect Oriental divans for luxury, but set up in the clouds, not large, not lofty, not well furnish-d, not well lined with books. To say the truth, my income was of that defective kind on which even the stern genius of British taxation looks with leniency, and allows us to make a deduction before those hateful coppers in the pound are ruthlessly exacted by Mr. Lowe. I had thought of going circuit, and in that case I should have selected the 'Home, sweet Home,' on account of the nearer contiguity to London, and the consequent saving of expense. I found that even this was beyond my reach at present, and that I had better take to it gradually, trying on a single assize town or so at first, and thus picking my way. At first I had gone to the criminal courts, on one account because criminal law was more dramatic and fuller of human interest than civil law, and, on another account, because the law was much easier. But I tired. There is a monotonous vulgarity in crime; one blackguard is very much like another blackguard. Then I betook myself to the back benches of the Westminster courts, where I consumed a good deal of foolscap paper by pen-and-ink profiles of the judge and leaders. There was a whole row of us, and we sat like bashful maidens waiting to see to whom those sultans of solicitors would throw the handkerchief. But although it would be in the highest degree derogatory to the honour of the profession to make the slightest overt advance towards a solicitor, yet those of us who had any interest

put the screw on very tightly, in order to get any briefs. But, alas! I was destitute of any professional interest. I had a schoolfellow a solicitor, but he himself was making spasmodic efforts to win his way. Still I was a counsel learned in the law, and I might have the satisfaction of contemplating the sapient wig which covered but could not conceal my own flowing locks. It was said of Alexander that he gave his captains all that he had, but reserved hope for himself. I had nothing to give away, but, also, I had nothing but hope.

But a chronic state of hope is rather a hopeless and depressing business. I had the sense to know that idleness at least gave me leisure, and that leisure is all that the most successful can look forward to as the prize of their career. I turned my leisure to account, partly by haunting the courts, perhaps partly by haunting other places as well. I began also to read at the British Museum, and even to attempt leader-writing and reviews, and to tread that literary downward path which leads to professional perdition. But I was saved from this untoward fate by my maternal uncle Blogg. Uncle Blogg came and knocked me up one fine morning. I was then a mere sucking infant at the bar—had not been called two years. For the latter years of my history Uncle Blogg and I had seen very little of each other. I was his dead sister's child, but in that state of comparative impecuniosity which rendered it extremely possible that I might appeal to him for financial assistance. Any such procedure would be extremely abhorrent to the mind of Blogg. Uncle Blogg did not like me—did not believe in me—did not think I should ever get called to the bar—did not think I should ever get on if I were called. This, of course, sounds very unnatural, but if you have not met the counterpart of such conduct among your own flesh and blood, I can

only say that you must have an extremely limited acquaintance with the unclo species of the human family.

It is such a happiness to be able to speak with perfect candour about one's relations. Uncle Blogg was cold-blooded, money-loving, selfish to a degree. He was narrow, and ignorant, and pudding-headed. But he had his good points. He would have been simply a fiend if he had not. He could put a very good dinner on his table, and would give you as good a bottle of wine after it as you could find anywhere in the country. He was hospitable also. You may say that this is a contradiction to what I have just now said of him; I can only reply that, as a matter of fact, we meet with such contradictions in human life. Uncle Blogg called upon me, as I speedily discovered, because he had need of legal advice. He had great objections to that sort of legal advice for which a bill might be tendered. He had had such a bill once, I am ready to admit, of enormous dimensions, and was resolved, if possible, that he never would have another. He wanted law, and he thought that from his nephew he might get it cheap. And I? Well, he was my uncle, and I owned that tender tie. I also remembered that he was a childless widower and a man of many acres.

'Well, Nephew Morton,' said he, with a conventional shake of the hand, 'and how are you? Going to be the new judge?' There was at this time a very regrettable vacancy on the judicial bench.

'Well, hardly, Uncle Blogg,' I said. 'We must first creep, and then go. I mustn't expect to be a judge until I have been another dozen years at the bar.'

'Well, they might do something quicker for a clever fellow like you. Lots of business, I suppose—eh?'

How I should have liked to have told my Uncle Blogg that up to that time I had not had a single brief! I should have liked a bit of sympathy. But I had a better chance of sympathy from the hearth-rug than from Uncle Blogg. The only chance I could have of obtain-

ing his money was to make him firmly believe that I should never stand in need of it.

'Well, sir,' I said, with a sort of equivocation, 'we youngsters at the law mustn't complain. I am not dissatisfied.'

'I'll be bound not,' said Uncle Blogg. 'My sister's son is sure to have lots of brains.' With all my family pride I had hardly thought that Blogg and brains went much together. And then he came upon me with a very direct pounce of a question. 'Do you know anything about the criminal law?'

I ventured modestly to reply, 'A good deal, I believe.'

'I'll be bound you do,' said Uncle Blogg. 'Attend the Central Criminal Court, eh? eh?'

This was his favourite method of interrogation.

'Well, uncle,' I said, 'I used to do so, but latterly I have quite given up the Old Bailey and confine myself to the Westminster courts.'

'Pay better—eh? eh?' said Blogg.

I modestly admitted that there was certainly more money to be made at Westminster than at the Old Bailey.

'Still you wouldn't mind, once in a way, taking a brief in a small criminal case to oblige a near and dear relation—eh? eh?'

'A brief!' Blessed words! And to think that my first chance of a first brief was to proceed from unsympathising Uncle Blogg!

'Well,' I said, diplomatically, 'I dare say I shouldn't. But I should like to hear all about it. What's the nature of the case, uncle?'

'It's only a sessions case, Nephew Morton.'

My countenance certainly fell.

'Ah! I see you're rather above that sort of thing. But many of our best lawyers have got into a great deal of business by attending sessions—eh? eh?'

'Yes, uncle; but in those days there was a great deal more business done at the sessions than is now the case. Still, uncle, anything to oblige you. I'm your man.'

'Well, it's a troublesome sort of business, all along of Miss Trafford.'

Now I had heard of Miss Trafford, who was my uncle's Indian ward, but with the eyes of the flesh I had never been allowed to behold her. She had been committed to his care, and Uncle Blogg had been supposed to have made rather a good thing out of the allowance from her estate; and it was even whispered that he was quite willing, being a widower, to take both his ward and her estate together.

But I have been thus parenthetically interrupting my uncle's explanation about Miss Trafford. He went on, as follows: 'Her lady's-maid has been taken up for shop-lifting at Seacombe.' Now Seacombe was the greatest town of that part of the country. 'There's no doubt but the jade stole the lace handkerchief; but Mary Trafford has taken it into her head that she didn't, and I have been obliged to do whatever she wanted me to do. No end of trouble. I've had to stand bail, and now I have got to get her defended at the sessions, and they come off next week.'

'I suppose this girl, the prisoner, or defendant, rather, the lady's-maid, is no longer at your house.'

'Oh, isn't she, though, and I bail for her, too! I keep her pretty sharp under my own eye, and my servants are on the watch if she should show any signs of bolting. If I had let her leave, I should have lost my hundred pound bail to a certainty. And there is another thing I want to ask you, Nephew Morton—what's the cheapest way of a man changing his name?'

And was my uncle going to change his name? As a partial Blogg, I resented the idea, although the Blogg element was always less regarded by myself than the Morton element, in my name and nature. Still the Blogg line, though in all its stolid antiquity it had never yielded a hero, was an old line.

'And what name do you think of taking, uncle?'

'Anything but Blogg. I don't like the name of Blogg now. I think I should like Trafford better. Poor old Trafford was my second cousin.'

I wondered whether the changing

of a name from Blogg into Trafford was designed to produce the same results as changing the name of a Trafford into Blogg.

The upshot was that I engaged to come down to Uncle Blogg's, the day after the next day. I was to come in the afternoon, and there were a few friends for dinner that day at the Hall.

Yes, Mr. Blogg lived at a Hall, and the residence had a right to that much-abused term. It was no huge, square, stucco, brick building, which some moneyed vulgarian had run up and then cheaply entitled a Hall. The Bloggs had had their thousand freehold acres from time immemorial, and the Hall ran back to a respectable antiquity. They retained the largest part of the land, called the Home Farm, in their own hands; and I am not sure that the living off the produce and a lot of farming ways had not partially contributed to make Blogg what he was. Still Blogg had his place, and he entertained and was entertained by other county people like himself, and when he gave a dinner, which wasn't often, he gave as good a dinner as might be.

It was years since I had been in the house, and I tried to revive my faded boyish recollections when I had come to great grief, when let loose in it one summer vacation. Blogg came blowing into my room, telling me that he would get the dinner over first and then he would tell me all about legal matters. 'And it's a regular sessions dinner, too,' he said, but that's mostly an accident. There's the Recorder, Mr. Serjeant Daldy, and Smithers, the attorney, who had the getting up of the case against her, and Jones, his friend the barrister, who's staying with Smithers, and to whom I expect he will give the brief for the prosecution, and the parson of the next parish: I don't ask my own parson, because he will read the offertory sentences, though he knows I don't approve of it, and Squire Glubb, whom you may have heard of.' And he went off to see about the wine, leaving me to dress and find my way into the drawing-room.

When I got into the drawing-room there was a thin, faded, vanishing fraction of a woman there, the companion and duenna of the ward. The ward herself was rather a jolly girl, with nice eyes and hair and pretty manners. Then there was Parson Glubb, rector, and brother to the Squire, with his wife and daughters, who were generally called, to distinguish them from the other lot, Mrs. Rector and Miss Rector. The serjeant was a pleasant, active, vulgar little man, who had rather dropped out of his barrister practice, and was supposed to be on the look-out for a county court judgeship. There was Jones, a man of little merit, whom I looked on as my forensic enemy, and whom I felt I could double up in any physical or metaphysical sense completely. The attorney was a sharp fellow, to whom I resolved to be affable, for I already had a deep instinctive respect for attorneys. I had settled in my own mind that I would attend Seacombe sessions and assizes, and make Seacombe the starting-point of a glorious legal career.

'It is a queer start,' said Uncle Blogg to me, 'but Kate will have to do some of the waiting at table. Susan's laid up with an attack of British cholera.'

I had no difficulty in recognising Kate, who, with another hand-maiden, helped the two serving men. A delicate, pretty, dove-eyed, glossy-haired, graceful maid was Kate, in the modest style of lady's-maid. She did what waiting she had to do extremely well; but it was so odd to see her attending these legal monsters, who in a day or two would be assisting each other to tear her in pieces; the solicitor who even now was doing his best on paper to blacken her character; the counsel who would be telling the jury they could not lay their heads on their pillows unless they convicted; and the judge, who, whether he was in good or bad humour, might give her either imprisonment or penal servitude. But such are the odd pictures which every now and then turn up in the phantasmagoria of human

life. No wonder there was a deep hectic flush on the frightened girl's cheek. I liked the maid much, and I liked the young mistress better. However I exchanged only a few formal words with her, and as she glided from the dining-room, she said, quietly, 'Let me see you in the blue room as soon as you can.' I made my way from the dining-room with its gloomy talk about poor-rates, church-rates, and future education rates, into the hall. There I encountered Kate, who, I firmly believe, was anxiously lying in wait for me, and who took me straight off at once into the 'blue room.' And a very comfortable room was the 'blue room,' with its low fire, and the curtains snugly drawn, and as handsome and frank a hostess as Miss Trafford admitting you at once into a confidential intimacy. Poor Kate showed by her quivering lip and streaming eyes how acutely she felt her position, and I was pleased to see the fair young mistress caressingly stroke the fair hand-maiden's glossy hair. In point of fact, they looked two young ladies together. Kate had always had tender nurture and had been with gentle people—a thoughtful girl, nice-mannered, fond of reading, as I found afterwards, and as little likely to qualify as a felon as any soft-spoken wench could be.

'Oh, sir,' she said, 'and is it you that I've got to look to to save me from being sent to jail?' And the young creature began to sob and went down on her knees by the side of her mistress.

'We are in great trouble, Mr. Morton,' said Miss Trafford; 'here's poor Kate accused of a robbery of which she is as innocent as you or I can be. The trial's coming off in a few days' time, and nothing is done in the way of defending her.'

'Good gracious, Miss Trafford; and hasn't she instructed a solicitor?'

'It's all Mr. Blogg's fault,' said Clara Trafford. 'He said at first that Kate's friends must be at the expense of defending her. I said I should do so myself, and didn't care what it cost. He then said that he had a relation who would do it

cheaper and better than anybody else, and who was such a very clever man. Are you the very clever man?"

'I hope there won't be much cleverness required to get your servant off, Miss Trafford,' I replied. 'Now tell me all about it. In many simple cases a short time is quite as good or better than a long time, in getting up a defence.'

The story was soon told me, and matters certainly looked a little dark against handsome Kata. She had gone into a shop at Seacombe and asked for a lace handkerchief. Now a girl in her station of life had not the least need of a lace handkerchief; but the maids have always imitated the mistresses, and so dainty a girl as Kate had more excuse than most of them. A set of handkerchiefs were shown her, but they were all beyond the range of her purse. She purchased some trifle for a few coppers and departed. As soon as she was gone it was discovered that an expensive lace handkerchief was missing. The shopkeeper ran after her and brought her back. She denied any knowledge of it, and it was presently found in her muff. The case seemed to lie in a nutshell, and certainly innumerable people have been convicted on slighter evidence. If a person is found in possession of stolen property directly after it is stolen, and is unable to give any account how it came into his or her possession, the law, not unreasonably, presumes that it has got hold of the thief.

I confess I was not very hopeful, notwithstanding my interesting client and her still more interesting protectress. I however concealed my despondings with all the address of a fashionable physician. 'I will tell you what you shall do,' I said; 'it will be the cheapest for Kate, and save the expense of a solicitor. As we are rather driven into a corner for time it may really be the best plan. You shall give me what is called a dock fee, that is to say you shall give me a guinea, which I shall give back to Kate. There will also be half a crown for my clerk. I mention this as we

must be regular, and a dock fee is rather a peculiar case. You must give it me with a copy of the depositions. Have you got them?' I asked.

'No, no,' said Miss Trafford; 'we left it all to Mr. Blogg, and he has really done nothing.'

I anathematized Uncle Blogg, and allowed no scruples of relationship to interfere with a very free expression of my sentiments respecting him. I asked Miss Morton to let a servant go over to Seacombe the first thing in the morning to get the depositions from the clerk to the magistrates, for which she would have to pay three-halfpence a page.

'Do you know anything, Kate, about this shop?' I asked of my fair client.

'Oh yes, sir,' said Kate; 'the shop's good enough, but it was that nasty fellow, Jem Stanton, who served me.'

'And who's Jem Stanton?' I asked.

'Oh! I can't abide him sir,' said Kate. 'He came and knocked at the kitchen window one Sunday afternoon, and wanted me to keep company with him, but I wouldn't. None of the girls like him, for he is a bad one. Ask cook if he isn't.'

Here was a gleam of light. I thought that this would be important. First, I asked Kate whether she thought it possible that Jem Stanton might have put the handkerchief into her muff. This was quite a new idea to Kate. She also candidly said that she did not think it likely. Her own version, which was a little roundabout, was this. She had left her handkerchief behind her, and this first led to her going into the shop. Once there, she thought of a much-desired lace handkerchief. She quite forgot, in her interest about the lace handkerchief, that she had none of her own about her, and had mechanically put the lace one into her muff, under the impression that it was her own virtually non-existent one. I thought that this would be much too elaborate for a British jury. They will always take a simple explanation instead of a complicated

one. Now a verdict of Guilty is always eminently terse, simple, and satisfactory. As a rule you can't go far wrong if you convict. —I believe that only about two per cent. of convictions are wrong, and about fifty per cent. of the acquittals.

Next morning I looked carefully through the depositions. I was, however, substantially in possession of all the facts. A policeman had deposed that when he took Kate into custody she had owned that she was very sorry, which that functionary chose to interpret as a confession of guilt. It was obvious, however, that this was not by any means a fair or necessary construction. I called the cook up, and she gave Jem Stanton as bad a character as any Jem Stanton could desire to have. He was the dread of mothers, and had once been fined for violently assaulting a girl who had refused his advances. I also went over to Seacombe and set on foot all sorts of inquiries respecting the character of the draper who was prosecutor. To my great joy, I discovered that a year or two before he had called his creditors together and made a composition with them. I now began to breathe; I thought I had a strong chance for an acquittal, and even a better one for some forensic display.

For the next few days, Clara Trafford and I were the closest of allies. In pursuance of my legal duties, I thought it necessary to be in constant conference with her respecting the case of our interesting client. I do not say that she formed the incessant subject of our conversation all the hours that we paced the shrubbery or sat together in the drawing-room. I was able to find out that Clara Trafford was a fine-hearted girl, of excellent culture and understanding, with a well-deserved contempt of Uncle Blogg and his ways. I ventured, indeed, to snub Uncle Blogg—especially as he showed a disposition to join our councils—with considerable sternness, and told him that his delays had well-nigh jeopardized my client's liberty and life. I really worked very hard for Kate, inasmuch as taking a dock fee—a cir-

cumstance which *per se* was highly gratifying to Uncle Blogg—I was both solicitor and counsel for the defence. Clara produced a beautiful old Queen Anne's guinea which had belonged to her mother, and insisted that my fee should come in that shape. I bored a hole through it, and at the present moment wear it proudly on my watch-chain.

Quarter sessions are nothing very grand—they cannot for a moment compete with the importance of the assizes—but they were at Seacombe held in the same great hall as are the assizes; and to a young lady like Miss Trafford, who had never been within any court of law previously, the vast hall seemed very imposing indeed. I was highly curious, but at the same time I was full of hope and energy, and a burning desire to distinguish myself. The occasion may seem a humble one, but many an Oxford or Cambridge man may tell you that his first speech at the Union Debating Club has cost him more anxiety than his first speech in the House of Commons. I had profited by those old Union days and also by a Discussion Forum which we had got up amongst ourselves in the Temple. I was very kindly received at the quarter sessions. It was looked upon as the most natural thing in the world that I should come down to practise in my uncle's part of the country. Mr. Serjeant Daldy gave me a kindly nod, and Mr. Jones, the prosecuting counsel, on the strength of having met me at dinner, called me his learned friend. I was sorry to see handsome Kate go into the dock, for I knew that the bare fact would attach a stigma to her for the rest of her life. This consideration alone ought to make a man very cautious how he ever gives any one into custody. I took care to challenge every linen-draper who was called on the jury. I promise you that the linen-draper who prosecuted was quite unprepared for the fiery cross-examination which I showered upon him. I went very fully into the most disagreeable part of that composition business with his creditors. I asked

him whether he had paid or meant to pay for that lace handkerchief alleged to be stolen, and I pretty broadly asserted that he and his family were nothing better than they should be. But even that was little compared to the questioning which Jem Stanton had to undergo. When I made out that he had been a rejected suitor of Kate's, a thrill of sympathy ran through the court. When I brought out that assault case—which wasn't so bad after all, as he had only been fined five shillings—I made him appear a monster in human form. When I had to cross-examine the policeman, I came out in that peculiar vein of bullying the constable which is a favourite amusement in courts of justice. I thundered away in the defence, for there was Uncle Blogg opening his goggle eyes with amazement, and there was Clara glowing with sympathy and interest. After all, the verdict was a toss up. But

it was a toss up in our favour. The prisoner was acquitted, and before the day was over I had the satisfaction of receiving two briefs—one from the solicitor whom I met at dinner at my uncle's—one for the sessions and one for the ensuing assizes.

This is the way in which I commenced going circuit—not unprosperously. Whether Kate's round-about version was true, or whether the shopman had secreted the handkerchief in her muff, or whether she had really stolen it, I do not profess to say. But there is one thing which I certainly do profess to say. If Uncle Blogg considers that he will get Clara to change her name to Blogg, or if he fancies that he will gain anything by the notion that he will change his own name into Trafford, he will be hugely disappointed. Beyond that, this deponent sayeth not.



BOATS



Saturday Afternoon

BOATING LIFE AT PUTNEY.

Sketched by A. Chasmore.



Anything but

Habitues

Her first

One whose Reign was

Divertis

THE Opera



Does enjoy it so



Stop the way



Strictly Correct

AT

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MAY IN THE PARK.

Sketched by Horace Stanton.

AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL. I

IT is one of the most remarkable characteristics of English life in the present day—the spirit which leads such large numbers of persons to do for nothing the work for which others are paid. There is scarcely a pursuit which has not its amateurs as regularly engaged as its professional followers. The work may be easy or hard, pleasant or unpleasant—it is sure to have its volunteers as well as its regulars, bent either upon amusing themselves, being useful to other people, or it may be combining the two objects. From such a glorious occupation as defending the country to such a merely useful one as looking after drains—every kind of work has its votaries, ready with time, exertion, and money in the cause.

Was there ever seen—to take the most striking instance first—such an organization as our Volunteer Army, in any other country? It is not very well contented just now, and has reason to complain of discouragement at the hands of authority, which insists upon not understanding the principle that, service being rendered without pay, the means of performing that service ought to be supplied by the state. It involves no sacrifice of the independence of the Volunteers to receive money for their expenses, provided the money be employed to meet them, and they do not put it into their own pockets; and it is well worth the while of the state to maintain the force upon those conditions. I believe this is all that the Volunteers are asking, and the concession of the principle would probably remedy many defects which at present affect the discipline, and therefore the efficiency of the service. The first requirements are more stringent regulations to secure attendance at drill, and a little more subordination to command. Without attention to these objects it is of no use to make Volunteers marksmen, for they will never, when occasion calls, be able to put their skill in practice. The want of real authority

falls, too, very hardly upon the officers, whose commissions cost them a great deal of money to maintain, and who cannot learn habits of command if the men will not learn habits of obedience. A great many Volunteers chafe at being under orders, but they ought to remember that the object of discipline is not to degrade them as men but to elevate them as soldiers; and under no circumstances would they be required to stand half the bullying that falls to the lot of the officers of the Army and the Militia, who have to accept a great deal of mortification as an honourable condition of service.

The relations of the Volunteers to the Regulars—of the Amateurs to the Professionals—are such as the former may maintain with every advantage to dignity. There is certainly dignity in doing duty without pay—provided that it is done well—and they are not liable to be called mercenaries by unpleasant persons of ‘peace-movement’ proclivities. They may fairly say that they are as much soldiers by position as any gentleman before the days of standing armies; and our standing army, it must be remembered, is an institution kept up only from year to year: it would fall to pieces at any time were the necessary votes refused by Parliament. The Regulars have, of course, ‘a pull’ over the Volunteers, because they know their business better, and are available to be sent anywhere to fight the battles of their country; but the Volunteers may hold their own, in dignity, with any of her Majesty’s forces. As for the Militia, they are not quite Amateurs and not quite Professionals, that is to say, they are Professionals for a month in the year, insofar as they receive pay for that time, when they are on precisely the same footing as the army. But for the rest of the year they are practically citizens, and may attach themselves to any pursuits they please. There is considerable connection between the Militia and the Army proper.

Every Militia regiment contains many men who have served in the Line; still larger numbers leave the Militia for the Line—indeed the one is familiarly described as the nursery for the latter, and is so, as is especially shown whenever a war breaks out. It is with the officers as with the men. Many officers leave the Line for the Militia; and, whenever there is war, many leave the Militia for the Line. Upon such occasion many Militia regiments go abroad, as they did during the Crimean war and the Indian mutinies, or replace Line regiments sent upon foreign service. When permanently embodied the Militia receives the same pay and allowances as during its annual training—that is to say, it is placed upon the same footing as the regular army; and its discipline and effectiveness, in a very short time, is found to be equally as good. The Militia, too, if professionally inferior to the Line, may at least claim the credit of being the constitutional force of the kingdom. There was no standing army until the time of Charles II.; in the time of Charles I. the only army in the country was, and was called, the Militia.

The regular Reserve Force is no more likely to be abolished than the Life Guards; and it is to be hoped that no neglect, mismanagement, or misunderstanding will put an end to the Volunteers. They have gone down a little in popularity, it must be confessed; but the cause is a highly complimentary one to the force. It is never likely to be wanted, people say: who dreams now of an invasion? True; but the reason why an invasion is no longer on the cards is that the national strength and spirit has shown itself in this form. The case stands thus, in fact: the more efficient the Volunteers become the less likely are they to be wanted; let them be disbanded, and who shall say how soon we may be menaced once more, and be obliged to maintain an army at home such as will drive the British taxpayer mad? The Volunteers have moral force because they represent physical

force, and they thoroughly fulfil the first duty of armaments—which is the maintenance of peace. The Amateurs, in this case, have surely no need to be jealous of the Professionals.

Consider what a change in the national life would be caused by the absence of the Volunteers. No more Rifle Association meetings; no more camps at Wimbledon; no more marches out on Saturdays; no more drills on the familiar grounds; no more social gatherings of the corps; no more stray Volunteers even seen in the streets! The change is difficult to realize after being used to all these things for ten years.

There is no Amateur Navy. The Reserve, called the Mercantile Marine, is a thoroughly professional body. But we have plenty of Amateur Seamen in our yachting men; and a place like Ryde, in the season, is almost as nautical as a place like Portsmouth. I am not aware that there is any rivalry between yachting men and officers of the Royal Navy; but there are circumstances under which the owners of yachts find it difficult to keep up their dignity in connection with their crews. These are not the thorough landmen, who do not profess to know anything about navigation, leave everything to the master whom they engage, and enjoy themselves in their own manner; and, of course, the remark does not apply to gentlemen who are thoroughly competent to take command of their own vessels. I allude to those who know a little and are apt to believe that they know a great deal. A little learning is nowhere so dangerous a thing as at sea; and nowhere does the Amateur appear at such disadvantage compared with the Professional. It is a far more sensible proceeding to make a fool of yourself on shore—in connection with a glazed hat, a monkey jacket, a telescope, and nautical airs generally—than to go afloat under false pretences and make a failure. But there are yachting men going about who are so enthusiastic at the idea of being in command that they assume all the authority of a naval captain

over their crews; and Mr. James Hannay tells us of one of these that he went so far as to give the men extra wages for the privilege of inflicting corporal punishment, in order to keep up the delusion. But this, I suspect, is a piece of service jocularly at the expense of nautical amateurs. I have heard such a story at Malta, where our friend 'Fulke Bisset' probably picked up his information. It has a great deal of the 'Who goes there? Naval officer drunk in a wheelbarrow,' flavour about it.

Clerical Amateurs are not unfrequently to be met with. Of course I do not include in the category dissenting ministers, whose calling is a professional one. I allude to a class of 'serious' laymen who devote their time and their money—in a most worthy manner, it must be admitted—to religious purposes, and are frequently more like clergymen than clergymen themselves. We have a nobleman or two belonging to the class; but, as a general rule, its members are persons of a parish turn of mind, and protect the interests of the church party at vestries, and hold parochial offices in connection with the Establishment. Their self-imposed duties bring them much in connection with tea and elderly ladies; they fall unconsciously into white cravats in the daytime; and the Sunday-school children have an idea that they will eventually be made bishops. They are apt to be fussy, and may have some human frailties in which vanity is concerned; but they are usually estimable people—and it is certain that they might be far worse employed. There is no jealousy between the Amateur and the Professional Clergymen. The latter are assisted and supported by their lay brethren; and they are so secure in their own orders that they have no need to fear competition of a practical kind.

Among Amateur Clergymen there are some who actually preach—preach without being paid, or at least without attaching themselves to any particular congregation. Notable among these is the 'Con-

verted Clown.' After passing a professional life in stealing sausages, making invasions upon costermongers and throwing their wares upon the stage, playing tricks upon respectable tradesmen at their own doors, jumping over red-hot pokers, smashing babies in chests of drawers, and picking up the Pantaloon by the back of his trousers, this gentleman now more profitably occupies himself with the spiritual amelioration of his fellow-creatures. There has been a blacksmith—Elihu Burritt—who performed a similar mission, and there was, as everybody knows, a tinker, who wrote the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' included in the class.

What shall we say of ladies who, led by similar instincts, perform similar functions as far as their sex will permit? There have been female preachers, but I rather refer to Sisters of Charity and Sisters of Mercy, who minister to the spiritual as well as the corporeal wants of their kind. I am here speaking of those who are bound by no vows and belong to no regular establishment—of Protestant ladies, in fact, whose exertions are of a purely voluntary kind, and who may be classed therefore as amateurs. They deserve all honour, for they do much good, and are as active during peace in England as they were during war in the Crimea. And we may praise them especially without any disrespect to those of another Christian church who have formally devoted themselves to similar service. Between the two there cannot—or at least should not—be rivalry, except in work.

Amateur Doctors are rare. There are plenty of people who doctor themselves, and doctor themselves generally to excess. They generally, too, give advice gratis to their friends, and try to find followers. But I have never heard of amateurs in the healing art who go about ministering to strangers. They would have a far worse chance than amateur clergymen; for it is one thing to give up your mind to an experiment, and quite another thing to give up your body. You may take back the one, that is to say,

in common parlance, you may 'change your mind' if any mischief has been done, but your body is beyond control, and the damage may be irremediable. Your mind is used to the process—it has been the subject of continual experiments from your earliest education; it is developed and enlarged by the various experiences; but your body is a very awkward customer and will stand no nonsense. We have therefore to beware of gratuitous advice in medical matters, as especially of quacks, who might be called amateurs, but that their object is money. No; we may talk loosely when in health of the infallibility of the medical profession; we may think ourselves particularly clever upon some points connected with it; and say even that our friend Tompkins has more rational notions upon the subject than half the College of Physicians. But let us, or those near to us, be seriously unwell, we do not trust ourselves, we spurn Tompkins as a man of mere crotchets or a bore. We send straight to the family doctor, duly qualified at the College of Surgeons and Apothecaries' Hall, even though he be not an M.D. into the bargain. We feel that in so doing we do the best for ourselves or others, and that if either do not get over the ailment, the *not* getting over it will be accomplished in the proper course.

There is one description of Professional doctor that may be included in the ranks of the Amateurs, and here again I have to refer to the ladies. Members of their interesting sex are now getting qualified as practitioners; but their entrance into the profession is confined to special instances, and the proceeding is of so out-of-the-way a character that they can scarcely be regarded in connection with the regular professional body. What can you say of persons who are in so anomalous a position that they are not sure whether they ought to wear petticoats or pantaloons, and who usually bewilder their patients by a curious combination of both? Ladies may make very good doctors when they are recognised as matters of course in the profession—by them-

selves and their patients when they are tested by general experience in the capacities to which they aspire. But at present they are only so many flies in amber; the principal consideration involved is how they got there and why they got there. They stand in the position of Amateurs; and most of us, finding anything the matter in our families, would scarcely be so likely to call in their assistance as to send upon speculation to the gentleman with the red lamp round the corner.

A similar conclusion must be come to in the case of Amateur Lawyers. We all know what the client is said to be who is his own legal adviser; and no man is obliged to have professional assistance unless he so desires. But let him beware of dispensing with it. He may advise himself out of court, and may possibly find himself in the right—he has at least the benefit of the chance. But woe be to the man who advocates his own case in court! There is a prejudice against him to begin with. The judge is aware beforehand that he will occupy a longer time, and give a greater amount of trouble, than a professional advocate. The jury very soon find out the fact, and deplore the difficulty they have in understanding the case. The counsel on the other side, for professional reasons, feels instinctive hostility towards the amateur advocate, and, with every appearance of 'distinguished consideration,' fails to treat him with the respect which he accords to a 'learned friend.' Even the usher looks upon him in a spirit of pity mingled with contempt. It is unfortunate for the court, too, that amateur advocates are never men easy to put down. Timid or doubtful persons would not place themselves in the position. They are always assured, persistent, and obstinate in their conduct of the case, whatever they may be. They never 'sit corrected,' even upon a matter of law. They assume from the outset that they know better than the judge or the counsel can tell them; they never expect fair play, and every objection which meets them they consider as part of a conspiracy

to defeat the ends of justice. When they have lost their cases—as they always do—they consider that the conspiracy has triumphed, and ascribe their defeat to the grossest corruption. The fact is that if the amateur advocate has a good case he is sure to make it a bad one; if he has a bad case he is sure to make it worse. You may have the best case in the world, but it will usually happen that there are points connected with it which it is desirable to keep in reserve, whether on account of the unfavourable impression which they convey, or may be made to convey, or because they tend to divert attention from the main issue. A trained counsel will cull from his array of facts and arguments just so much as is essential to his case, and carefully eliminate the rest, to be kept in reserve, for use only should occasion arise. He never proves too much, as to do so is only to expose additional points for attack. He takes care that his positions shall be few, and the strongest he can find, and these he urges again and again, to make them familiar to the court and jury. A case in court is not like a debate in Parliament, the victory is never gained by a side wind. In court you must keep to essentials, and unnecessary matter is most dangerous to introduce. Amateur advocates, besides being hazardous in their law, always fail to appreciate this simple fact; and to aggravate their disadvantage they not only introduce irrelevant points, but they insist upon them, and put the court and the jury out of temper. This is the worst mistake that can be made, and was never known to succeed, except at the Middlesex Sessions, under exceptional conditions to which I need not refer. As a general rule, the amateur advocate, besides placing his case in its worst possible aspect, thoroughly bores everybody about him, and then he is surprised to find himself on the losing side. He is allowed a latitude as to time which would never be accorded to a professional counsel; but this is rather against him—it gives him ‘rope enough’ for a proverbial purpose, for which

he employs it with remarkable punctuality.

I need scarcely say that when the amateur advocate happens to be a lady, all the characteristics referred to are exaggerated and intensified in a remarkable degree. Compared with feminine persistency in a matter of the kind, that of a man is ‘as moonlight unto sunlight and as water unto wine.’ Women are getting into men’s professions, and we may see lady-lawyers one of these days, but they will never succeed at the Bar. They will look well in their wigs and gowns, perhaps, but beyond that I see no hope for our interesting rivals.

Pictorial art is a great ground for amateurs. Nearly every young lady at school learns drawing, and can copy if she can do no more. What beautiful eyes, noses, and mouths they bring home at holiday time, culminating, it may be, in the head of a hermit or a Madonna! What force they throw into the picture of a stream, with a man fishing in it, for the sake of truth and nature! These productions are a little touched up by the master, but are highly satisfactory to admiring friends. As a general rule, young ladies do nothing more after the master’s influence has departed; but the general taste for art is increasing, and those in whom it is strong do a great deal of good work at Schools of Design, and some of the pupils at South Kensington are of high proficiency. Of these there are Professional as well as Amateur; but of the great body of Art Amateurs comparatively few exhibit pictures or publish sketches; though it may be here mentioned that the best sporting sketches in the most popular comic journal of the day are drawn by the daughter of a Dean. At the principal exhibitions of the year the works of amateurs—that is to say, of persons who do not mean to make money by their works—are comparatively rare in oil-painting, though they are well represented in water-colours: for oil-painting is a laborious art, and people soon get tired of cultivating it for mere pleasure. We have a Royal Princess who is notable among the amateur followers

of art, and Her Majesty herself is known to be an accomplished artist. I have seen original sketches made by the Queen in mere idle moments which indicate both skill and talent in no small degree. The branch of art pursued by the Princess Alice is, I need scarcely say, Sculpture, the most laborious of all. Her Royal Highness has few followers in this severe study—among ladies, at any rate. Among men we have had some distinguished amateurs, but the most notable were foreigners—Count D'Orsay and the Baron Marochetti; but both of these gentlemen employed their talents professionally, in an incidental manner. Count D'Orsay has left to the public many productions of his chisel and pencil; and among the latter 'the D'Orsay Portraits' are unsurpassed for their artistic ease and grace, as well as the faithful rendering of their originals. They are in a style seldom followed in these days. Free sketching has to a great extent gone out, and literal finish is demanded even in drawing. We used to hear of 'touches' that meant so much; we seldom see them now: the object, whatever it is, must be faithfully represented. Well, there was a great deal of conventionality in the careless sketches of which Reynolds and Lawrence were such masters; but they were evidence of thoroughly artistic hands, and inferior men had to 'try hard to be as easy,' as the Vicar of Wakefield's daughters did to imitate the manners of Lady Blarney and the Honourable Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs. Baron Marochetti was an illustrious example of an amateur sculptor who became professional; but his inspiration was unequal. Who would suppose that the Richard Cœur de Lion, now down at Westminster, could have come from the same hand as the Lord Palmerston which was banished last year from Palace Yard?

Theatrical Amateurs. You see them on all sides. In public and in private they are equally at home. Of late years their relation to the professionals has been considerably increased; the association indeed has become very intimate. They are to be found in all classes of set-

tled society, from small clerks and shopboys upwards. Private theatres have been long since existent at which the humble amateurs—frequently with professional views—have exhibited themselves to their friends. These establishments are self-supporting, and the actors pay fees in proportion to the importance of their parts. Thus Richard III. may be obliged to disburse a couple of pounds for the privilege of airing the winter of his discontent, flirting with the Lady Anne, offering his kingdom for a horse, and conducting his single combat with Richmond on Bosworth Field, while Catesby and Ratcliffe will probably obtain *their* privileges for a few shillings. But all must pay, in order to cover expenses; and the system of payments being thus regulated, the result is not uniformly successful. The result, indeed, is apt to be dreary in the extreme; and I believe that, as a rule, there is nothing more melancholy to be seen in London than performances of this class. In better grades of society a better system prevails. Drawing-room performances are apt to be absurd, but they are usually separated from vulgarity; they are apart from the bitterness of ambition, and are cultivated by men for sport. Some fun is at least got out of them, and they afford the opportunity to young gentlemen and young ladies of testing talents which are not likely to be tested elsewhere. But the taste for displays of the kind has taken such a hold upon society that a large class of amateurs will not, in these days, condescend to drawing-rooms. They engage concert-rooms, music-halls, and bijou theatres for their displays; they give their privacy a large latitude; receive money for admission, under cover of some charitable object; and bring so many strangers to see them that they enjoy much of the excitement which comes from the presence of an actual public. In this manner men and women of real position in society manage to test their qualifications before audiences which, for the most part, know very little about them, and are therefore impartial judges of the performers. Sometimes such

entertainments are of a very satisfactory character, thanks to the drilling from professional people undergone beforehand; at other times they do not exceed the standard of drawing-room displays, and these occasionally include things very felicitously done in the way of charades. Some of the most successful performances in private life, indeed, are those improvised in country houses—not quite in earnest—and where the ladies especially are freed from the embarrassment which comes from preparation and the consciousness that strangers will be among the audience. We all know the fun that may be got out of such recreations; and where men and women are thrown together to amuse one another, there can be no pleasanter way of accomplishing the object. Country houses have their nights as well as their days; you cannot be always out of doors; and a time comes when conventional amusements fail, and that important period included in 'after dinner' must be provided for in other ways. Theatricals are thus a great resource, and they are all the pleasanter when nobody cares much whether they succeed or fail.

But, unfortunately, all Amateurs are not content merely to divert themselves and their friends. They become ambitious, and nothing will please them—men and women alike—but displaying themselves under conditions of semi-publicity. Then it is that the halls and concert-rooms are engaged, and benevolent objects discovered for the gratification of individual tastes. It is very charming for those engaged, who have all the fun of the rehearsals, and all the honour and glory—if there be any of those articles going about—of the grand representation. But I am not so sure that the audiences are equally fortunate. We have in London, however, more than one amateur company that knows its business very well—having had careful training from professionals—and with real talent of its own to give it a *raison d'être*.

India—I mean of course the India of Anglo-Indians—is a great field for private theatricals. To say no-

thing of the Presidency towns, there are few stations that have not their theatres, and the same provision may be found in most barracks of European regiments. In the latter, the men are the principal performers—officers occasionally joining them. Everything is done by amateurs, even to the scenery, and the result is usually most satisfactory. The one drawback is the female parts, which are necessarily filled by men. A juvenile ensign, however, is very apt to be ladylike in appearance, and in the absence of hirsute adornments he makes up very well. I have seen triumphant illusions in this way; but one has a natural prejudice in favour of the reality, and the deprivation is a drawback, there can be no doubt. But what can be done? Ladies of position will not play in barracks; and in a country like India they are too well known to unbend to the extent that they sometimes do in England; and it is seldom that the wives of non-commissioned officers and privates are found to have the qualifications. In the Presidencies and larger stations amateurs are generally able to get professional actresses to help them, as they do frequently at home. How the dresses are made is a marvel; but Indian tailors are very clever at copying any models that are set before them, so the performances do not at all suffer in this respect. The ensigns who play the ladies are usually set up in costume by their friends, some of whom are known to have been so condescending as to help them to dress.

On board the Peninsular and Oriental Company's ships theatricals are a favourite amusement. The materials for a stage are usually found ready to be set up on the quarterdeck at a few hours' notice; and one of the officers of the ship is sure to have a collection of 'Lacy's Acting Editions,' which indeed are to be found in most stations in India: so there is no great delay in getting up a dramatic performance, even in the midst of the Indian Ocean.

Some of the most devoted amateurs

in this country used to be children. But toy stages seem to have gone out, having given way probably to the scientific recreations which are now so popular. But in minor neighbourhoods you may still see the materials for mimic plays; and even 'Skelt's Scenes and Characters'—a penny plain, twopence coloured—have not entirely disappeared. I suspect that they are patronised mainly by the humbler classes of the juvenile community—those who subsequently develop into actors themselves, at the private theatres already referred to.

In London, of late years, Amateurs have considerably invaded the stage in the character of Professionals. The fact shows the strong hold that amateur acting has taken upon society. But I need not enter into this part of the question, which has recently been discussed in the pages of this magazine.

Literary Amateurs—their name is legion. They are everywhere, and write for everything. They have an advantage over Pictorial and Dramatic Amateurs that they do not—or suppose they do not—require special training. Pen, ink, and paper, and a certain command of words, are presumed to supply every requisite. This, at least, is certain—that the want of technical experience may be dispensed with in many walks of literature, so that there be real talent in its place. Some prose writers, as all poets are said to be, are born and not made. The literary faculty—

'Like Dian's kiss, unask'd, unsought,
It gives itself, and is not bought.'

But only in exceptional cases. The best writers among us—and notably the two who are most popular and prolific—have borne testimony to the labour and the study which they have found it necessary to undergo before obtaining the full use of their natural powers. And if Lord Lytton and Mr. Dickens have both experienced difficulties in development, what may not be expected from smaller people? But some men are doubtless more ready than others—for the reason, as may be generally found, that they have

less depths to explore, that they are less fastidious, and do not attempt so much as their better stored and more ambitious brethren. It is easier to pick up a little gold lying on the surface than to dig for vast treasures beneath.

However all this may be, it is a fact that amateur writers abound in London. Had they all their own way, no professional writer would be allowed to pursue his calling; the amateurs would write all the books, the plays, the reviews, the magazines, and the newspapers. Every publisher will bear me out when I say that he has more manuscripts sent to him than he could possibly publish were his business a dozen times as extensive as it is. Ask any theatrical manager, is he not inundated at his stage-door by showers of pieces which experience tells him it is not worth his while even to read? Put the same question to the editor of any periodical—magazine or newspaper—and he will tell you the same tale. The contributions that pour in upon him are unceasing. They exhibit great variation in tone and style, and the writers allege all kinds of grounds for sending them. Some are supremely confident, and, taking it for granted that their MS. will be published, stipulate that it shall undergo no alteration at the editor's hands; others of this class make remuneration the principal condition, and request that a cheque be forwarded to them by return of post. On the other hand, many are so diffident as to the merits of their productions, that they request the editor to correct any errors in style or grammar that they may contain. Various touching personal excuses are sometimes made by the writers. One has a widowed mother to support, or he would not venture to take up his pen. Another has recently lost her husband, and is seeking consolation in literary pursuits. A third is confined to his room with a lingering malady, and does not know what to do with himself; or is watching over a sick wife, and seeks literary occupation to lighten the long hours. A candid gentleman will occasionally say that:

he has just lost a lucrative appointment, and is 'taking to literature' because he sees no chance of making money in any other way. An enormous number of governesses send contributions with the apology that they wish to add to their slender incomes.

Occasionally an amateur will avow himself a genuine aspirant for fame, who courts the Muse like a lover. But the majority rather patronise Parnassus, or consider the Castalian Fount principally in its vulgar relation to 'keeping the pot boiling.' These people, one and all, take it for granted that anybody can write well enough for the periodicals of the day who chooses to do so; and many, as we have seen, add the complimentary assurance that it is the last thing they would do if they had a chance of doing anything else. They very soon find out their mistake, you will say. Not always: the bulk of them, I believe, who are neglected by editors, attribute the fact to a conspiracy of the professional interest against them. 'Grub Street,' they contemptuously say, 'keeps strangers off its ground; literature is a monopoly; the regular scribblers are jealous,'—and so forth. It is wonderful how people who can scarcely put six lines of sense together, claim the privilege of sneering at 'Grub Street,' and stigmatising professional writers as 'scribblers' and 'hacks.' Not long since a man who can just manage to write a decent letter dropped in upon a distinguished author, and saw him dashing off 'copy' with considerable facility. With the composure of his class, he lit a cigarette, and waited until his companion should be at leisure. As he saw slip after slip being added to the MS., he musingly said, 'What a pity I did not think of taking to writing when I was hard up!'

I have hitherto been referring to the impracticable amateurs. But there are hundreds of persons not dependent upon literature, and whose main object is not that of making money, who not only contribute habitually to the best periodicals of the day—newspapers included—but write books into the

bargain. Indeed, half the books published, certainly most of those upon special subjects, are written by men and women who are not professional in the full sense of the term. In cultivated classes of society it is difficult to say who does not write in these days. Her Most Gracious Majesty is a writer as well as an artist; and ladies of rank and fashion find it the most natural thing in the world to write novels and books of travels. Amateurs—on the practicable list—crowd the periodicals, and ladies are especially enthusiastic as volunteers of the pen. Even in the weekly and daily press, many of the stock contributors are ladies, who write 'leaders' or lighter articles. A great many of these Volunteers doubtless regard the Regulars as somewhat inferior to themselves. It is all very well, they fancy, to write because you please to do so; but to write professionally is 'low.' There is a great deal of this feeling abroad, and some periodicals give the preference to amateurs, as being less likely to be hackneyed in their ideas. There is a superb affectation of the kind in some 'high-class,' or semi-fashionable periodicals; but the editors usually find that amateurs, though very useful occasionally, are not to be depended upon for long; the professionals have to do the bulk of the work; and the fun of the thing is, that the most high-flown and 'swell' style of articles—attributed to noblemen and statesmen—are usually found to be the work of some *littérateur* who is almost a Bohemian, or at best some briefless barrister in the Temple, the main object in either case being the vulgar remuneration.

The amateurs themselves soon get out of the affectation of superiority. That is to say, if they are successful, and care about the pursuit, they soon cease to be amateurs, and take their proper rank among the professionals. For a writer who writes habitually, and receives payment for his writings, must be included in the latter class. He may have private resources—may even be independent of his pen—but he is professional for all that. If not,

we must hold that an officer of the army who has a private fortune—and few officers of the army are quite dependent upon their pay—is not professional, but only an amateur; and the same remark will apply to beneficed clergymen, or lawyers, or doctors in regular practice. Now many volunteer authors begin by disdaining payment, as Lord Byron did. But like Lord Byron—who may, I think, be considered a professional writer—they soon overcome this scruple, and exact their dues as zealously as any of their brethren. Ask any publisher or any editor who stands out for the highest terms. He will tell you that they are the writers of the highest social rank and position, who are of the volunteer element in literature. Their vanity, indeed, would not permit them long to write gratuitously; for without the practical test how are they to know what they are worth?

Poets, by-the-way, seldom disdain to make the most of their muse; and when they are really popular this amounts to a great deal. The Laureate is said to realize fairy sums from his writings, the sale of which 'goes on for ever'; and a younger poet, who also 'sells,' is believed to be following in the same pleasant course.

Among the members of the regular professions there are a great many regular writers. Clergymen continually connect themselves with literature in the most professional manner; doctors do so occasionally; and barristers are everywhere in the pursuit—though, to be sure, many of these have little or no practice, and some do not even seek it. Writing, as a regular business, is considered in the way of a man's getting on at the Bar. Your solicitor is jealous and suspicious, and will not believe that two things can be done at once. Literature, he considers too, is apt to make a man fanciful and crotchety, and unfitted to act a hard and stern part in legal affairs. The idea is, to a great extent, a delusion. I believe that literary training is conducive to a breadth of mind which is an important element in advocacy—con-

ducive to getting out of grooves, and gaining causes, far more than is generally supposed. It is certain that some of our most successful lawyers have been extensively engaged in literature. To take only a couple of instances in our own time. Judge Talfourd wrote plays while in the height of his legal practice; and Mr. Samuel Warren wrote novels during the busiest period of his professional career. There are many practising barristers in the present day who might be included in the list—most notably, perhaps, in the field of journalism.

Men in the public service largely contribute to literature. Statesmen and diplomatists, if they do nothing else, do much in Memoirs. Taking only our own time, and citing only a few instances. Lord Derby was a literary man, and might have lived by his pen. Lord Lytton is a literary man, if ever there was one, and a professional one too, for literature has always been his main pursuit—public life only his occasional distraction. The same may be said of Mr. Disraeli before he gained a position in politics; since that time he has rarely employed his pen, and has been very little associated with literature, though I am glad to see that he is once more to the front. Mr. Gladstone is a man of letters of a high class; but his literature is the result of his scholarship—he has never written in a professional spirit. Sir George Cornewall Lewis was an illustrious example of the literary volunteers; and so was Lord (Sidney) Herbert, in a lesser degree. There is no need to mention minor men of this class.

The Army and Navy have always contributed valiant Soldiers of the Pen, but never in such numbers as in these days, when, among junior officers especially, you may find an author in almost every regiment and almost every ship. The superior education now required in the service will sufficiently account for the fact. How seldom do we find an officer of either service in France who has anything to do with literature!

That the elements which we call amateur for the sake of distinction

—but with the qualification insisted on above—should exist in the *personnel* of literature—is doubtless an advantage both to literature and the public. It is a mistake to suppose that the highest and most original creations of thought and imagination have come ‘like Diana’s gift, unasked, unsought.’ It too frequently happens that these triumphs have to be asked very frequently, and to be sought with much pertinacity, before they will consent to arrive. Some of the most glorious things in our language have been produced under pressure; and the greatest works in all languages that have come down to us have been the offspring of men who may fairly be called professional. But volunteers—in current literature especially—have frequently a freshness of their own, and bring to particular subjects a particular knowledge not always to be commanded elsewhere. They become professional when they set regularly to work, and after that there is no need to consider them as exceptions.

There are a great many examples of the association of the amateur and the professional element in less intellectual pursuits. There are gentlemen and professional players at cricket who are very good matches for one another. There are amateur as well as professional pugi-

lists, who are not quite so easily matched. There are amateurs in boating, too, and the best crews are quite capable of holding their own against any regulars that may arise. The same competition exists in athletic sports generally, where amateurs have things much their own way; and gentlemen jockeys are not apt to be far behind in a race. At billiards the few professionals have an advantage which comes from exceptional ability and constant practice. There are amateurs, too, in mechanical pursuits. Some men make all kinds of things with lathes, and others have been known to construct steam-engines for their amusement—as Louis XVI. had a fancy for lockmaking. But these nearly exhaust the list of pursuits in which amateurs are engaged. That so much interest should be taken in so many avocations, without the inducement of profit except in the few cases where profits are incidental, is one of the best signs of the energy and active spirit of the nation. On the Continent there is a great deal of play and just a little sport; but gentlemen seldom devote themselves to objects that require skill, patience, labour, and thought to carry them out, without more material inducement than—even in the exceptional fields of literature and art—is offered to amateurs in this country.

S. L. B.



A DOG HUNT ON THE BERWYNS.

THANKS to the columns of the sporting papers, every Englishman, whatever his occupation, is sufficiently familiar with the details of fox-hunting, and all other kinds of hunting usually practised in merry England; but few, I fancy, have either seen or heard of a dog-hunt. It has fallen to my lot to participate in such a hunt; one, too, which was quite as exciting as a wolf-hunt must have been in the olden time, or as that most glorious of sports, otter-hunting, is now. Imagine to yourself a three days' chase after a fierce and savage dog, a confirmed sheep worrier, and that in the midst of the picturesque ruggedness and grandeur of the Welsh hills.

Some three or four miles east from Bala, the Berwyn Mountains raise their heathery summits in the midst of a solitude broken only by the plaintive bleat of a lost sheep or the shouts of men in search of it.

For miles the purple moorland rolls on without a moving creature to break the stillness. Deep ravines run down on either hand through green, ferny sheep-walks, dotted with innumerable sheep. These ravines in winter time, when the snow lies deep on the hills, are, when not frost-bound, roaring torrents. In the summer, huge blocks of stone are scattered about in strange confusion, and a tiny stream can scarcely find its way between them. Lower down still can be seen, here and there, a farmhouse, in some sheltered glen, kept green all the year round by the trickling moisture. Further off still, in the valleys, are villages and hamlets tenanted by hardy Welsh sheep-farmers and dealers.

In the least-exposed corners of the sheep-walks are folds built of loose, unmortared stones, in which the sheep huddle to find shelter from the fury of the frequent storms which sweep over the mountains.

As the wealth of the hill farmers consists chiefly of sheep, if a dog once takes to worrying them, he is

either kept in durance vile, or killed. The habit once acquired is never got rid of; and after a sheep-dog has once tasted blood, it becomes practically useless to the farmer. The quantity of sheep that can be killed by such a dog in a short time is almost incredible.

It may be imagined, therefore, with what feelings the Berwyn farmers heard of sheep after sheep being killed on their own and neighbouring farms, by a dog which nobody owned, and which ran loose on the mountains catering for itself. Descending from the lonelier parts of the hills, it would visit the sheep-walks and kill, as it appeared, for the pure love of killing; in most cases leaving the mangled bodies on the spot.

Month after month ran by, and it still eluded the vengeance of the indignant hillmen. The most exaggerated accounts were current respecting its size and ferocity. No two versions agreed as to its colour, though all gave it enormous size. As 'it afterwards turned out, it was a black and white foxhound bitch.

Everybody carried a gun, but on the few occasions that the dog came within shot, it appeared to be shot proof. The loss of numerous sheep was becoming serious; in some instances the farmers suffered heavily. It was the staple topic of conversation. From time to time, paragraphs, such as the following, appeared in the papers published in the neighbouring towns:

'THE RAPACIOUS DOG.—The noted sheep destroyer on the Berwyn hills still continues to commit his depredations, in spite of all efforts to kill him.

'The last that was seen of him was on Sunday morning, by Mr. Jones on the Syria sheep-walk, when the dog was in the act of killing a lamb. Mr. Jones was armed with a gun at the time, and tried to get within gunshot range; but it seems that the animal can scent a man approaching him from a long distance, so he made off im-

mediately. After it became known to the farmers and inhabitants of Llandrillo that he had been seen, a large party went up to the mountain at once, and were on the hills all day, but nothing more was heard of him till late in the evening, when he was again seen on Hendwr sheep-walk, and again entirely lost. On Monday a number of foxhounds were expected from Tanybwlic, and if a sight of him can be obtained, no doubt he will be hunted down and captured, and receive what he is fully entitled to—capital punishment.

On a bright May morning, five months after the first appearance of the sheep-destroyer, a pack, consisting of a dozen couple of fox-dogs, with their huntsman, started up the lane from Llandderfel to the hills, followed by a motley crowd of farmers and labourers, armed with guns and sticks, and numbering many horsemen.

Up the lane till the hedges gave place to loose stone walls, higher still till the stone walls disappeared, and the lane became a track, and then a lad came leaping down the hill, almost breathless, with the news that the dog had been seen on a hill some six miles away.

Up the mountain, down the other side, up hill after hill, following the sheep-tracks, the cavalcade proceeded, until we reached the spot where our quarry had been last seen. A line of beaters was formed across the bottom of a glen, and proceeded up the hill. Up above was Dolydd Ceriog, the source of the Ceriog, which came through a rent in the moorland above.

A wilder scene could not be imagined. On either side the hills rose up, until their peaks were sharply defined against the blue. The steep sides were covered with gorse and fern, with fantastic forms of rock peering through. At the bottom the infant Ceriog eddied and rushed over and among rocks of every shape and size, forming the most picturesque waterfalls. In front up the ravine the numerous cascades leaped and glittered, growing smaller and smaller, until the purple belt of moorland was reached.

The hounds quartered to and fro, and the men shouted in Welsh and English. The hardy Welsh horses picked their way unerringly over the *débris*.

'Yonder he is,' was the cry, as up sprang the chase a hundred yards ahead. From stone to stone, from crag to crag, through the water, through the furze and fern fled the dog, and the foxhounds catching sight and scent, followed fast. At first they gained, but when the pursued dog found it was terrible earnest for her, she laid herself well to her work—mute.

Startled by the unusual noise, the paired grouse flew whirring away. The sheep were scattered in confusion, and a raven flew slowly away from a carcass. Upward still we went, the footmen having the best of it on the uneven ground—

'Upward still to wilder, lonelier regions,
Where the patient river fills its urn
From the oozy moorlands, 'mid the boulders;
Cushioned deep in moss, and fringed with fern.'

Now the hounds are over the crest, and soon we followed them. We now had the bogs to contend with, worse enemies than the rocks.

'Diaw! John Jones, I am fast,' we heard and saw an unfortunate pony up to its belly in the bog. Another stumbles in a crevice and sends its rider headlong. We footmen have still the best of it, although it is no easy matter to run through the heather.

We had now reached the other side of the mountain, and were fast descending into the valley of the Dee. There seemed a probability of our catching the quarry here; but no, she left the heather—much to my relief, it must be confessed—and made for the valley, past a farm; now well in advance of her pursuers; over the meadows; then, for a short distance, along the Bala and Corwen line. Then past Cynwyd village, where the crowd of people, and the various missiles sent after her, failed to stop her. Then through the churchyard, and along the road for some distance.

Here a man breaking stones hurled his hammer at the bitch, but missed her.

Turning again, she made for the hills, running with unabated speed, although she had been hunted for nearly ten miles. The original pursuers had melted away, but we were reinforced by numbers of others.

Here I obtained a pony and set off again.

By this time the hounds were in full cry up the hillside. Mile after mile, over the hills we followed, now only by scent, as the dog had made good use of her time, while the hounds were hampered by people crossing the scent at the village.

'The shades of night were falling fast,' when we came to a brook flowing from the moorland. Here the scent was lost, and the wild dog was nowhere to be seen. We held a council of war as to what was to be done. I was the only horseman present at first, but by-and-by the huntsman and others came up, bog-besmeared, and in a vicious frame of mind. We looked a queer group, as we sat in the light of some dead fern that somebody had kindled. Some were sitting on stones; others kneeling down, drinking from the brook: some whipping the tired dogs in, and others gesticulating wildly.

One thing was evident—nothing more could be done that evening; and the hounds were taken to their temporary home, to rest all the morrow, and resume the hunt on the day after.

On the morrow, from earliest dawn, messengers were coursing the glens in all directions, with invitations to people far and near to come and assist in the hunt. For myself, I was glad to rest my tired limbs. Although pretty well used to mountain work, I was quite done up; still, I resolved to see the end of the fun, and hired another pony.

The day after, the men kept pouring in to the place of rendezvous, till I was sure the majestic hills had never before witnessed such an assemblage. From far and near they came. Many, like myself, were mounted upon Welsh ponies. We commenced beating; and the Berwyns rang with the unearthly yells of the crowd. We reached Cader

Fronwen, one of the highest of the Berwyns, without meeting with a trace.

Here I was put *hors de combat* by my pony sticking fast in a bog; and as every one was too busy to help me, there I had to stay, and the hunt swept on. Soon the noise of the beaters died away, and I was left alone, sitting on a stone which peered out of the bog, holding the bridle of my unfortunate steed, and every now and then cutting heather and pushing it under its belly, to prevent the poor creature sinking any deeper into the mire. Here's a pretty fix, I thought.

Soon the mist which enveloped the summit of Cader Fronwen came sweeping down the gorge in a torrent of rain; and, even if my pony had been free, it would have been madness to stray from where I was, as I could not see two yards before me, and I did not know the paths.

By-and-by I heard them coming back, and then saw them looming gigantic in the mist. After having extricated my pony, as I was chilled and wet through, I made the best of my way to Llangynog, while the rest of the party—or multitude, rather—made for the Llanrhaeadr hills, but as I afterwards learnt, without success. Tired with a hard and long day's work, the men separated, and made off for their respective homes. No traces of the dog had been found, although every likely hill had been well scoured.

Some of the people averred that the devil must be in the dog. The major part of the farmers believed that the savage animal had been frightened away, and most probably would not be met with again for some time. Acting under this conviction, the hounds were sent back by train the next morning.

The morrow was beautifully fine; and, little expecting that I should see the death of the sheep-worrier, I had gone for a ramble over the hills, armed with my geological hammer. I was sitting on a slab in an isolated quarry, watching the varying tints of the hillside, as shadow and sunshine coursed each other over the tender spring green of the grass, the darker green of the

new fern, and the warm yellow-brown of last year's fronds, and admiring the contrast of the grey rocks angrily jutting out amidst the loveliness, and the whole crowned with the purple heather, rising above a narrow belt of mist, when a man, gun in hand, came clinking down the sloping rubbish, digging his heels in at each step, and excitedly told us—the two or three quarrymen and myself—that he had seen the dog lying on a rock about a mile away.

A boy was despatched to summon the neighbouring farmers. In a very short space of time, about fifty were on the spot, armed with guns of every conceivable make and age. Stealthily creeping up the hill, we were sent in different directions, so as to surround the sheep-walk where she lay.

In half an hour's time, a gradually lessening circle was formed, all proceeding as silently as possible, and taking advantage of every tuft of fern or stunted thorn, so as to get as near as possible before arousing the sleeping dog.

There was a distance of about eighty yards between each man, when the brute rose up, and stretched herself, showing her white and glistening fangs.

Uttering a low growl as she became aware of her position, she set off in a long swinging gallop towards the heather. Just in that direction there appeared to be a man missing from the cordon, and a wide gap was left through which it seemed probable she would escape, and a storm of shouts arose. Just, however, as escape seemed certain, a

sheet of flame poured out from behind a clump of thorn bushes and fern, and a loud report went reverberating over the glens. The dog's neck turned red, and she rolled over and over, uttering yelp after yelp in her agony. There was a miscellaneous charge from all sides. Crash came the butt-end of the gun which had shot her on her body, with such force that the stock was splintered. Bang! bang! everybody tried to get a hit at her, even after she was dead.

When life was quite extinct, we all gathered together, and a whoop of triumph awoke the echoes, startling the lapwings on the moorland.

As we marched down to the village we fired a volley in token of our success, and cheer after cheer told of the gladness with which it was welcomed by the villagers. The man who fired the lucky shot was carried through the streets of the village on the shoulders of two stout quarrymen, and the whole population gave themselves a holiday and made merry. A large subscription was started, and contributed to handsomely, in order to pay for the hounds and other expenses.

Upon examination, the bitch was found to be branded on the left side with the letter 'P;' so if any of my readers have lost such a dog, they will know what has become of it.

I do not suppose that a more exciting chase was ever witnessed since the old wolf-hunting days.

It may seem strange to many, as it did to me, that foxhounds should chase one of their own breed, but the fact remains that they did so.

G. C. D.



RIDDLES OF LOVE.

CHAPTER XXI.

SHOWING HOW A HEROINE MAY BE SAVED FROM A NERVOUS FEVER.

HAD May Pemberton enjoyed the privileges of most young ladies of her class, in having nothing to do but amuse herself and be admired, she would probably have had a severe attack of illness after her meeting with Halidame at Richmond, and the scene with her father on the terrace. But a great deal of suffering is saved by people having no time to encounter it. Idle persons have always doctors at their doors. Active persons—that is to say, those whose activity is enforced—may feel occasionally that they want medical attendance; but they practically say to the medical attendant, 'Wait a little, my dear sir, I shall have leisure next week, and then you shall investigate about my heart;' or, 'Next week I hope to get a holiday, and then I will have my bilious attack without fail.' In the meantime the symptoms have perhaps disappeared; the comparative leisure or the actual holiday comes, and is enjoyed, and the doctor is forgotten. Look at the case of an army in the field going through a campaign. In the face of the worst privations endured in the worst climates—in India, for instance, during the hot season—the men are exposed, it may be, for months together to perils and to plagues of every kind—to constant strain upon their minds and bodies; and it is found that there are fewer on the sick list than when they are luxuriating in comfortable cantonments. The campaign once over, the wear and tear relaxed, the hardships at an end—they are half of them in hospital. But even then the reaction is not a very serious matter; it is killing only in comparatively few instances; and in civil life, when nothing but healthy occupation has kept off the maladies of the flesh, there is probably no reaction at all.

May Pemberton clearly owed a nervous fever at least to the medical

profession. But she had no time to pay the debt; so the medical profession had to wait. What was she to do? Mrs. Grandison was with her at ten in the morning, reminding her of a rehearsal at twelve which must be attended. Nervous fevers were not to be thought of; and poor May had to cast her cares on one side, and threw herself into the business of the theatre.

And when once that resolve was taken there came real relief. Happy are they who have other people's troubles to attend to instead of their own. A barrister's life would be a burden to him if he had to feel a hundredth part of the anxieties which he represents in court, or even to have a more intimate knowledge of them than he gets from his brief. A doctor whose knowledge is necessarily intimate would scarcely survive the shocks of a short period of practice had he more than a professional interest in the cases committed to his care. An actor who identified himself with his characters in thorough earnest would simply go mad. In either case, apart from professional habit, the healthy action of the profession must be attributed to its engrossing nature, and the separation of the professor from himself. Lawyers, doctors, and actors may die early as other men do; but it is through exceptional causes. Where other things are equal, where they have fair play and plenty of employment, they live longer than any other classes—except perhaps soldiers, who stand by *their* profession, and have escaped the chances of war, and statesmen who pass the greater portion of their lives in warfare of another kind in the House of Commons. Activity may kill sometimes, but then it is activity accompanied by personal anxiety. Activity pursued with professional or political objects usually keeps men

alive. After all, a man seldom feels so acutely the cause of his clients, his patients, or his country, as the cause of himself, when his means of livelihood, his character, and perhaps his honour, are the matters immediately concerned.

You must not suppose, therefore, that May—who had now come under the category of what they call public characters—cared less about her personal troubles than leisurely ladies would have cared under similar conditions. But there was Mrs. Grandison, and there was the rehearsal. Neither could be evaded; and May had her head full of the part which she had to perform. The piece in which she was to make her *débüt*, I may here mention, was not quite an old one nor quite a new one. It had been produced some years before, when it had not been properly represented or properly put upon the stage. But certain advisers of the management of the Imperial thought it would be especially suited to the powers of the new actress, and I dare say they were in the right. It was a romantic play, abounding in strong situations, and one in which the heroine was a far more important personage than the hero. The heroine had to be maligned and persecuted, but to be tender and true throughout; to have some hard struggles, to make some hard sacrifices, and in the end to be heroic and happy. It was very good business, in fact, as was observed by the literary gentleman who was engaged to revise and re-write the piece as far as might be necessary—the piece being of foreign origin and nobody's property in particular.

All this was highly satisfactory; and the general opinion of those who had seen the rehearsals was, that, unless the actress broke down before the audience, the most splendid success might be anticipated for 'Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge.'

May did not feel at all like the daughter of a doge, as she drove to the theatre with Mrs. Grandison; but the effort thus made restored her mind to its proper tone, and at once surrendered to the struggles

of an ideal passion, she thought no more of the real sorrows that ached in her heart.

May enjoyed the rehearsals, though it was some time before she became reconciled to the prosaic appearance of a theatre by daylight—especially behind the scenes. 'What!' said she to Mr. Mandeville, when first initiated into the mysteries, and taken into the painting-room; 'do you mean to say that all those rough old pieces of painting are parts of the new scenery?—that those things can ever be made to look like the Grand Canal, and those to resemble a ball-room in the Doge's palace? I can better fancy that you might make a dungeon in the Inquisition out of the others, because anything will do for a dungeon. And this wretched thing—well, it is shaped like the Rialto certainly, but the public—won't the public hiss? If they do I shall run off the stage.' Mr. Mandeville laughed, and said that she must not run off the stage whatever happened, unless required to do so by the stage directions; and he assured her that the scenery was quite new, even such parts of it as had been used in the 'Merchant of Venice' being repainted, and that it would look beautiful by night. So May was satisfied, and by degrees accepted everything she saw as matters of course, and even regarded with gravity the doge's state banquet laid out in the property room—a Barmecide's feast made up of candelabra and false flowers, with covers and goblets of the very best Dutch metal.

But there was one peculiarity of dramatic life in which May was not quite instructed; and it was only now—at almost her last rehearsal—that she received a suggestion of its nature. She had an idea that people who played together must all be on harmonious terms, and be impelled in their performances only by one object—that of realizing the conceptions of the author to the best of their abilities, and affording to one another the greatest possible assistance. She had, to be sure, been early warned by Mrs. Grandison that she must not make pri-

vate friends of everybody she met at the theatre, as some of them might not be desirable associates, if only from the fact of their different stations in life; and in this respect she was instinctively prudent. But she could not conceive that any of Mr. Mandeville's company could be capable of bearing her any ill-will, especially if what people said should prove true, and she should really render great assistance to the theatre. But some of the ladies, she learned upon this occasion, were unfeminine enough to be jealous. Miss Calderon, for instance, who did not play in the piece—for the reason that Miss Mirabel assumed the part to which she would otherwise be entitled—was, May learned privately from Mrs. Grandison, her enemy for life; and the two or three others who *did* play were not pleased with her prominence, and had no idea of making their characters of more minor importance than was absolutely imperative. Thus Mrs. Valence, a lady with charms rather in arrear, who played a countess of somewhat vicious tendencies, but full of fascinating foibles, was determined, May was warned, to outbid her, if possible, for the applause of the public; while Miss Rosemary, who appeared as a susceptible waiting-woman, and had a great scene with a comic gondolier, on the steps of the Doge's palace while the ball was proceeding within, was suspected of being in league with the gondolier to make the comic business so effective as to spoil the audience for the serious interest that was to follow, when the scene changed to the interior of the festive hall.

These alarming facts were communicated to May during the intervals of rehearsal, and did not make her more pleased with the prospect before her than she had been before. 'But she could not,' she said, 'complain of others doing their best, considering that they had as much right to gain favour with the public as herself.' Mrs. Grandison smiled at this liberal concession, and hoped that Miss Pemberton would not find occasion to alter her views. 'I had

no wish to make you uncomfortable,' she said; 'but I thought it as well, seeing and hearing what I do, to tell you beforehand, so that you might be a little on your guard. Not, however, that you can do anything yourself: if these people interfere with you, I dare say Mr. Mandeville will interfere with them.'

This little hint of rivalry had at least one happy effect—it helped to distract the thoughts of the *débütante* from more personal matters, not only during the drive home, but for the rest of the day.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. MOLE ASSISTS MISS MIRABEL'S FIRST APPEARANCE.

Of the numerous persons interested in the success of 'Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge,' the most outwardly anxious perhaps was Mr. Mole, the acting manager of the Imperial Theatre. This gentleman, as his official title denoted, was Mr. Mandeville's deputy, who managed all the executive business for him; for Mr. Mandeville, though he undertook to be his own manager, was too great a man to trouble himself about details, except when his special attention was called to them; and he had never interfered so much as since his engagement with the new actress. The many responsible duties devolving upon Mr. Mandeville in his accumulation of wealth necessitated a secretary, as a matter of course; but this functionary was a very different person from Mr. Mole, and had quite enough to do in the way of correspondence. Moreover, though his business was principally transacted at the theatre, it included a far wider range than the affairs of that speculation. There was Mr. Mandeville's church, for instance, which was fast approaching completion; and Mr. Mandeville was now adding to his other enterprises nothing less than a newspaper. For though, as we have already heard, he had considered at one time that a man might feel settled in life with a church and a theatre of his own, he had recently arrived at the con-

clusion that perfect contentment would not be secured without the addition of a newspaper; and impelled by this idea he had just projected a daily journal. In this, as in other speculations, he showed himself a thorough master of the business in hand. He did not trouble himself in the beginning about writers. These, he said, would come naturally when he was ready for them. Reporters were perhaps a more serious consideration, as there are only a certain number of gentlemen with the special training required for the work, and these are generally engaged. But he had never known, as he remarked, a newspaper to break down for want of reporters; and by paying good prices he had always found that a man had a tolerable command of the market in most things. So his first care was to provide sufficiently spacious office premises—not an easy thing to obtain in the proper quarter—and an extent of machinery which, he declared, must be overwhelming. ‘In these days,’ said this wise and experienced man, ‘we must publish at a penny; and if you publish at a penny you must get an enormous circulation to pay. And to get an enormous circulation you must have an enormous production, and an enormous production cannot be accomplished without enormous machinery; and when you are prepared with the supply, the demand will come as a matter of course, with proper agencies for distribution, if the paper be only decently conducted. If it be something more than decently conducted, the thing will of course bring me in another fortune; and of course I shall provide for this requirement when the preliminary arrangements are complete. For the rest, I am prepared to carry on the paper for three years at a loss with which nobody is prepared to compete—and this is the secret of success in journalism in these days.’

Such were Mr. Mandeville’s sentiments in reference to the new enterprise in which he had embarked, and it may be that they proved well founded. But I mention the matter incidentally only, as illustrative of

the great manager’s growing command of the public, from the study of whose tastes he had already made so splendid a fortune.

But I have no concern with the newspaper just now. My more special object was to introduce you to Mr. Mole, whose preparations for the appearance of the *débutante* were of no ordinary kind, and indicated the great expectations formed of her in the theatre, and that gentleman’s acute appreciation of a dramatic opportunity.

Mr. Mole was a little gentleman with large spectacles. That was the first impression he produced upon the casual observer. But there was a great mind within the little body, and a great deal more was seen from behind the spectacles than from the united optics of a hundred common men. Mr. Mole had such little eyes that the large spectacles might have seemed to strangers an unwarrantable assumption—except that strangers never saw the two apart, and so were not led to make invidious comparisons. And Mr. Mole had, besides, such a little nose that you wondered how the spectacles rested upon it, until you came to the philosophic conclusion that this consideration was the spectacle’s business rather than yours, and you decided not to trouble yourself about so ignoble a question. You could not deny, however, that the result of the arrangement illustrated a remarkable amount of mental penetration, and for this Mr. Mole had always been famous in the world where he was known. This was a world quite apart from the worlds pluralized among the public. It was not the world of politics, of literature, of art, of society. It was not the world of officialism or the services. It was not the ‘serious’ world, of which we have seen Mr. Sharpnal to have so high an opinion—for particular purposes. It was not even the theatrical world as represented before the curtain. It was the world behind the scenes—the most renowned and the most exclusive world of any; the world about which the public to whom it appeals knows so little, notwithstanding the curious

interest to know more which that little seems to create.

Mr. Mole, before he became acting manager at the Imperial Theatre, had gone through most of the phases incidental to the career of an *Entrepreneur*. He had speculated in public performers as men speculate in the public funds, taking his chance of their rise or fall in the same manner, but with a little more difficulty, owing to the exigency of engagements, in the way of selling out. He had never been a manager himself, but he had been the cause of a great deal of management—or mismanagement, as the case might be—in others. He had never been himself on the boards before an audience, except to make a business announcement about somebody else, but he had been the occasion of many actors and actresses appearing in that position; and if anybody could have a more thorough acquaintance with the stage than anybody else, I fancy that person must be Mr. Mole. Of late years he had relaxed in speculations of the kind, and preferred to take what he called ‘the certainty’ offered to him at the Imperial Theatre. Some people said it was because he had lost money upon his own account; but I suspect that his reason was of a contrary character. Some men consider success a signal to go on; others look upon that condition as a warning to leave off. Mr. Mole, I fancy, was one of the latter kind, who, having made as much as he wanted by speculation, was content to seek the desired superfluity in the safety of a salary.

Mr. Mole took the most tender interest in the success of May, and, among other means towards that end, neglected no opportunity of propitiating the public journals. For this purpose he began by propitiating Mr. Hanger, who was a wonderful medium in that way, and got things into print for other people that other people could never get for themselves. Some of the papers were haughty and would not express opinions in advance; but others were more complaisant, and ‘understood’ that the new actress was to do all kinds of wonderful things.

I here allude to London. In the provinces, where editors have not so much choice of interesting matter as in the metropolis, and are apt to entertain an abstract reverence for ‘copy’ of any kind, the praises of May were not only enthusiastic, but diffuse to a most gratifying extent; and the number of ‘our own correspondents’ who happened to know everything concerning her was among the marvels of the age. Mr. Mole, too, did not omit to distribute free admissions in every influential quarter. Not only the newspapers, but friends present and prospective, were accommodated in this manner, as is usual on first nights, when a piece or a player require support. ‘After the first night, and the thing was safe,’ as Mr. Mole observed, ‘it would be very easy to suspend the free list, and advertise to the public that there was no possibility of making room for them in the theatre—which would be the surest way of bringing them there.’

I mention these matters that my readers may gain some idea of the excitement caused in town by the expected *débutante*, who only a few months before seemed destined to endure Shuttleton for the term of her natural life, and lived so much in retirement as to cherish the impression that to be present at the Mayor’s ball was to be committed to the vortex of society.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A FIRST NIGHT AT THE IMPERIAL THEATRE.—‘LOVE AND LIBERTY OR, THE DAUGHTER OF THE DOGE.’

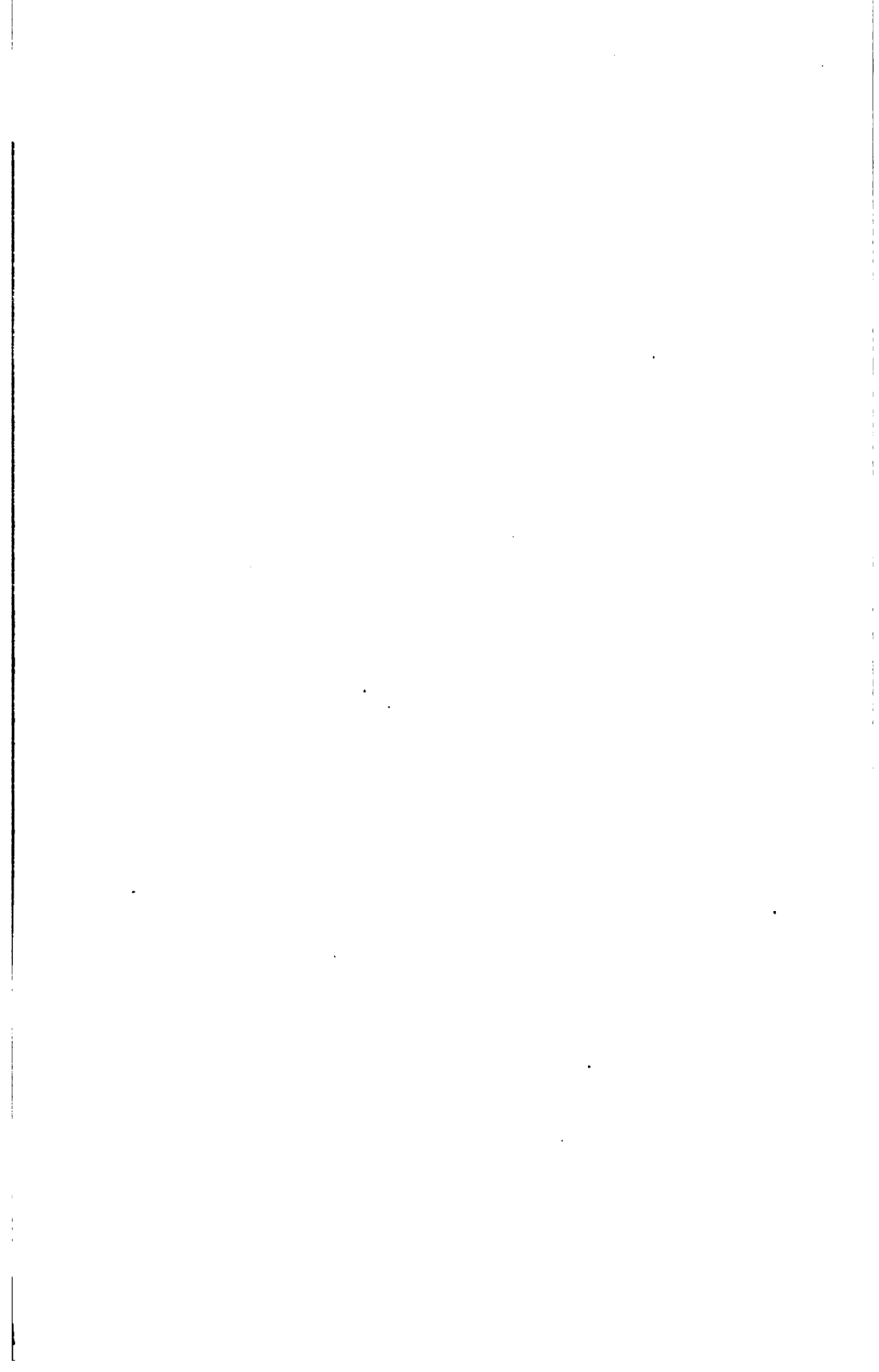
There was great excitement on the following Saturday, both before and behind the curtain. I mean, of course, at the Imperial Theatre, where Miss Mirabel was to make her first appearance on any stage, in the part of *Bianca*, in the play of ‘Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge.’ They called the piece a ‘play’ in the bills, to distinguish it from either a tragedy or a comedy, to neither of which class it properly belonged, and to rescue it from the invidious description of ‘drama,’ which would suggest illegitimacy. But I surely need not explain these



Drawn by Adelaide Claxton.]

MAY'S TRIUMPH.

[See 'Riddles of Love,' Chapter XXIII.]



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distinctions to the reader, who probably understands them as well as I do myself. My only object in being particular upon the point is to make the fact apparent that May Pemberton was not the heroine of a mere three-act affair, begotten who knows how, but had all the sanction of legality that five acts can afford, and took her place, however experimentally, among the stars of the stage.

There was excitement on both sides of the curtain, but it was of a different kind.

On the one side was hope, mingled with anxiety; on the other was curiosity, mingled with nothing at all.

May felt a grand consciousness of power, which ought to succeed if ever success was deserved; but, on the other hand, she felt a fear of that dreadful public which might misunderstand her—and she was instinctively aware of the peril of being misunderstood. One such mishap might be her ruin—not only for the night but for her whole future career.

May, too, was not encouraged by the attitude of her father at the last moment. He had, as we know, always been averse to his daughter's appearance in public; and now that the time had come, his reluctant acquiescence assumed the form of a sullen assent under protest, which made him as depressing a companion as can well be conceived. However, he accompanied May to the theatre in a brougham which had been engaged upon a weekly tenure from the livery stables, and for the rest, left her under the protection of Mrs. Grandison—who of course played in the piece—and the ministrations of Mrs. Mannering, the ancient mother of Leonora, who had instructions never to leave her mistress when she was off the stage. She was thus in good hands; for Mrs. Grandison was thoroughly sincere in her friendship; and when she meant protection in earnest, did her work in the spirit of a dragon, and effectually warned off impertinent intruders; while Mrs. Mannering was all that the most abject of faithful dependents could possibly be, and when once committed to in-

structions would carry them out to the letter. This respectable old female had proceeded to the theatre in advance, in charge of May's special wardrobe—a gorgeous collection comprising three different costumes, each surpassing the other in richness and effect. Mrs. Grandison had consulted the *débutante* beforehand upon the importance of making the most of the opportunities of the part in this particular. Her own experience was, she said, that so long as there was no absolute incongruity, the more brilliant the toilette the better. It would at least please the eye of the most intellectual portion of the audience; while a very large portion, who did not pretend to be intellectual, would be influenced by it in their estimation of the performer. May, who, though aspiring to be a great artist, was still only a young lady in many respects, had no prejudice against being well dressed; so, submitting herself to the ideas of a certain milliner in Wigmore Street, who professed to work for the Court, she made no objection to any amount of decoration.

The Pembertons arrived at the Imperial an hour earlier than was necessary, in deference to the anxiety of May, who was under the fixed impression, from the first thing in the morning, that she would be too late. It is a dreadful ordeal, a first appearance on any stage. I believe that, as regards the sensation just before the crisis, that of charging a battery to the very mouths of the guns is nothing to it. You may imagine, then, that May was not in the most serene of conditions, and was impatient for the event she most dreaded—the drawing-up of the curtain. The business-like appearance of the preparations in the theatre somewhat reassured her; for people can incur all kinds of dangers in company that they would never face by themselves, and she felt that others, at least, were associated with her in her deed of daring. She made a mistake, however, in supposing, as she did, that she saw 'First appearance on any stage,' visibly depicted upon the countenances of everybody about her.

The excitement which she saw in the faces of the acting-manager, the members of the company, and even the stage carpenters, said simply, 'First night,' and had reference to the piece merely, and to the first appearance only in so far as it was connected with the general object of interest. But May fancied that everybody shared her anxiety, and the fancy was sufficient for the purpose—to say nothing of the encouragement given to her by Mrs. Grandison, who was, of course, an exception to the rest. Mr. Mandeville was in the theatre; but May did not see him before the great event, and was rather relieved to find that he did not emerge from his private room. Mr. Mandeville, as I have mentioned, did not interfere in the stage arrangements, but he made a point of coming down to the theatre, more especially on important occasions, for the sake, as he said, of the moral influence which his presence had upon everybody in his employ.

'If it was known that I was not coming,' that great man was wont to remark, 'every man and woman would more or less scamp their business.'

So he sat in his room upon the present occasion, looking over some correspondence, and exerting his moral influence with the assistance of a cigar.

There was a little piece before the great one—a *lever de rideau*, occupying no stage room, so that the Grand Canal, which graced the opening of 'Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge,' could be prepared without interfering with the London house-front, with arc-railings adorned with pewter pots, which formed the flat in 'Jemima's Day Out.' The latter piece was a thorough 'screamer,' by-the-way, turning upon the perplexities of Jemima, a servant-maid, who, on her day out, is not allowed to get much further than the front area, owing to the confusion caused by an excess of lovers—including a policeman, a soldier, and a pot-boy—and the complications arising therefrom.

May did not, as you may suppose,

witness this interesting effort of humour, being sufficiently engaged in her own room. And even when the curtain at last rose upon 'Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge,' the moment for which she had waited was still a little way off. For Bianca (Miss Mirabel) had not to appear until nearly the end of the first scene, when, landing from her gondola, which has met with an accident, at a miscellaneous part of the city, she finds herself the unwilling ear-witness to a conference of conspiring nobles, one of whom is her lover, whom she is in the habit of meeting at her father's palace. She is attended by her haughty aunt, the Countess of Carrara (Mrs. Grandison), and the two would meet with inevitable assassination but for the interference of the lover, Count Farina (Mr. Vavasour, a rising *jeune premier*), who persuades Bianca not to tell, and induces her also to induce the haughty aunt to keep the secret. So the secret is kept for a time—owing to Bianca's affection for Farina, and the haughty aunt's affection for Bianca—until it cozes out through some natural channel, and the piece is enabled to proceed.

The house meantime, but feebly occupied during the farce, had filled to the ceiling; and in the boxes and stalls were a great many people we know. The Imperial, by-the-way, is not one of the largest theatres in London, but is of the moderate size most approved in these days, when, if the public have not much dramatic enthusiasm, they at least like to see and hear.

In the stalls the most noticeable person was Colonel Jericho, whom we met the other night at Richmond; and near Colonel Jericho were his friends Colonel Coventry and Captains Bath and Hongkong. I scarcely need mention Captain Tracks, for that young officer goes without saying—that is to say, goes wherever Colonel Jericho goes. In the stalls also were more of the Richmond party—Rupert Harrington, the rich, the handsome, and the haughty, he of the 'blood and culture,' who longed for a literary reputation, but had to pay for the publication of his writings; High-

jinks, the burlesque writer, who looked and talked like a sprite out of one of his own pieces; the genial Hanger, whose gregarious nature brought him to any gathering of the kind as a matter of course; and, last not least, Lord Arthur Penge, who haunted the theatres as only an amateur actor can, and who was getting on himself so well in the art that he had nearly persuaded Mandeville to give him an engagement in his company, and pay him a salary.

In a box on the first tier, near the stage, might be seen the charming Lucy Manton and her husband, to whom presently entered Cecil Halidame, who, however, for reasons in which I suspect certain persons, not unconnected with Curator Street, were concerned, kept in shadow, and seldom showed a bold front to the audience. In the next box was Mangles, the dramatic author, who went to see other people's pieces, I believe, through a morbid curiosity that prevented him from staying away. He certainly did not look as if he were deriving any amusement from the present performance. Opposite to him, in a box by himself, was the celebrated Mr. Swandown, the critic of that potential journal, 'The Epoch,' who ought to have been the hardest man in the world, and was one of the softest, and did his spitting so gently as to convey the impression that a person of his undoubted critical powers must mean a great deal more than he chose to say. A little farther on, in another box, was the proprietor of another daily and distinguished journal, with a selection from his charming family of daughters, two of whom, by-the-way, might be seen in the stalls, where that gentleman's gentle and judicious critic might also be seen prepared to be pleasantly impartial as to the performance, as was his wont. Scattered about was an editor or two—editors are scarce at theatres—and more critics who need not be further noted, as well as more *littérateurs*, some of whom came late and could not get further than the lobby, where they obtained but a precarious view of the stage,

but had the satisfaction of being able to talk among themselves as much as they pleased. Among the latter were two or three artists, one of whom was bent upon a sketch of the principal scene in the new play—the sensation scene in which *Farina* takes a leap from the top of the doge's palace, after the conspiracy has been discovered at the ball, into a friendly gondola, conducted by the comic gentleman who has the love-scene with Miss Rosemary—for that celebrated pictorial journal the 'Illustrious Age.'

The house, indeed, seemed half occupied by what vulgar people call 'professionals;' and a remark to that effect was made by a tall handsome man—no other than Mr. Windermere, whom I had forgotten to mention—who sat next to Highjinks in the stalls. He did not know the people, by-the-way, until Highjinks told him who they were.

'Surely,' said he, 'if all these great men come in without paying, it is rather an unprofitable arrangement for the management.'

'Ah, but this is only a first night,' explained Highjinks; 'if the piece makes a hit it will fill the house for two or three hundred nights, and we shall soon find the free list suspended—except as regards a few who can't be kept out—and the management will coin money to any extent. Managers use the free list quite as much as the free list use the managers. When a piece flags and they want to keep it upon the stage, they regularly force an audience by means of orders, and are very glad to get people to take them. A manager may well say,—and here Highjinks burst characteristically into parody—

'Oh, Free List, in our hours of ease,
We may despise thee as we please,
But when blank boxes wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou;'

and he added—'A first night comes under the same category. A new piece, or an old piece revived, is always an experiment; and who knows what might become of it if left to an ordinary audience? They don't damn in these days; but they might not know what to do without

help, and would be as likely as not to miss the real points of the play.'

Highjinks, you see, had just the same contempt for the public that has been noticed in other persons who minister to its tastes.

Miss Mirabel—I give her the theatrical name for the sake of propriety—was waiting meanwhile in a condition which threatened to make her pay her debt to the doctors, in the shape of a nervous fever, after all. Her excitement was immense when the curtain drew up—amidst applause from all parts of the house—and discovered Venice by moonlight, with the conspiring nobles in the foreground; and the leap which she was soon to take seemed quite as perilous as that of *Parina* from the top of the doge's palace.

She watched them from the wing—the cloaked and rapiered conspirators—as they talked of the glorious freedom that they meant to secure for the state when its present tyrants were put out of the way, and listened to every word they said as all-important to herself. But for Mrs. Grandison, who waited with her, and took a business-like view of the position, she would perhaps have anticipated affairs and made a premature discovery of the conspiracy. But induced by the more experienced lady, she waited for the practicable gondola, and did not feel half so embarrassed as she had anticipated when they both embarked in that—as seen from the back—rather ridiculous-looking craft.

In another minute May was before the audience and had made her first appearance upon any stage.

She stepped out of the gondola with Mrs. Grandison and stood near the conspiring nobles, as yet unobserved by anybody except the people in front, who saluted her with a storm of applause. For a few moments May saw neither the conspiring nobles, nor the people in front, nor anything at all in fact. All about her seemed in a whirl. The grouped conspirators were like mere shadows, and the circled spectators were a mere mass of light and colour. Where should she turn?

She made a movement to go back to the gondola, but was restrained by a touch from Mrs. Grandison, who, as the haughty aunt, was fortunately enabled to assume this kind of control. So, in the most natural manner in the world, May was brought back to the business of the scene. She advanced and took up her position on the stage, remembered all that she had to do, and waited with something like composure for the first 'cue,' which came from Mrs. Grandison.

In another minute she had passed the Rubicon. She had heard the sound of her own voice—she had heard the plaudits which came from every part of the house—she had spoken, was answered, and had responded—and she had not forgotten what was to come next. She was like an amateur in swimming who feels on a sudden that he is afloat. She felt afloat now on the tide of public favour, and a great inspiration filled her pulses. From that moment she was the mistress of the audience, whom she looked upon as something abstract and removed. She threw herself into her character, and found the business of the scene to come as a matter of course. All terror, all doubt was now at an end, and May moved about the stage and talked her share of the dialogue with as much ease as Mrs. Grandison herself. Nothing could be better than the manner in which she took up her position, and nothing more flattering than its recognition by the audience. So said Mrs. Grandison when they were closed in by the next scene, in which they had fortunately nothing to do.

In front of the house the general opinion fully justified Mrs. Grandison's remark.

'She'll do, by Jove!' said Colonel Jericho, from his stall.

'Nothing more certain than that,' accepted Colonel Bath.

'I'd bet anything upon it,' endorsed Captain Coventry.

'So would I,' backed up Captain Hongkong.

'Yes, she'll do, decidedly,' settled Captain Tracks; 'and what an awfully swell girl!'

'Beautiful!' was the general response along the whole line.

All over the stalls, in fact, there were not two opinions upon either branch of the subject—the talents and the beauty of the new actress. Lord Arthur Penge was loud in laudation. Rupert Harrington was lost in admiration. Highjinks indulged in absurd demonstrations of ecstasy. Windermere was silent in wonderment, and meant more perhaps than anybody. Hanger remarked that he had always said she would be a success—which he had not, but that was no matter.

In the boxes the impression made was the same. Mr. Swansdown was evidently moved to a narrow escape from enthusiasm, and compromised himself to a favourable *critique* by applauding vigorously. Mr. Mangles mentally determined that he would write a piece for the girl at once, and meanwhile he would give her every possible encouragement—for it was whispered that Mangles was a critic as well as a dramatic author, and some people ventured to guess the paper he wrote in. The regular critics were all in a complimentary chorus. In one box the first appearance of the actress produced an unexpected effect.

'Good Heavens!' exclaimed Halidame; 'it cannot be—impossible—give me your glass, Manton, like a good fellow. Yes, it is indeed—it's May Pemberton.'

'It is, it is indeed!' cried Lucy. 'What a surprise! Who would have thought it? Captain Pemberton so proud, too! And how sly of her never to have told us! Yes, and there—there you see is the lady we met with her at Richmond.'

'Yes,' said Halidame. 'I knew Mrs. Grandison at the time, but did not know that she was May's—Miss Pemberton's—companion.'

Manton was not so much surprised as his wife or his friend at the discovery of the identity of Miss Mirabel, or rather he was not so much interested in the fact; but he took a practical view of the occasion, and said that Lucy must ask her to dinner.

In the meantime the play was proceeding.

There was a great scene—a secret interview between *Bianca* and *Farina*, near a ruin on a lone island by moonlight, where she reproaches him with his treason but cannot withhold her love. The manner in which May rendered this conflict of passion was a splendid piece of acting, and the whole house was roused into real enthusiasm. May was elate with triumph when she came off, and received the congratulations of her friends like a conqueror. The great Mr. Mandeville—who, you may be sure, did not keep in his room all the evening—was especially profuse in his praises, and prophesied for her a glorious career. Even Captain Pemberton, who stayed behind the scenes, not desiring to meet people whom he might know in front of the house, was surprised into genuine admiration, and for the first time in his life, perhaps, felt a real sympathy with art, and forgot his conventional objections to the character of an actress. The congratulations, too, were interrupted no less than three times, when May had to go on to receive the renewed homage of the audience.

I am afraid, however, that everybody behind the scenes was not equally charmed with Miss Mirabel's success. Mrs. Vallance, for instance, attributed it to the presence of friends in the house, influence exerted in the stalls, &c., and, in her character of an enemy and rival, made stronger attempts than were quite legitimate to discomfort the *débutante*. But though others saw exactly what Mrs. Vallance was doing, May was quite unconscious of the fact, so absorbed was she in the character to which she was committed. Miss Rosemary had no opportunity to attempt direct annoyance, but she made the most of the comic love scene with the gondolier, as was expected, and overplayed her part in such a farcical manner that, as Mrs. Grandison remarked to Mr. Mole, 'Miss Rosemary seemed to have quite mistaken her line, and should for the

future play in such pieces as "Je-mima's Day Out."

The waiting-maid and the gondolier were certainly a long time about their love-making, and gave to it a character not quite consistent with the dignity of the play; but they made the unreflecting laugh, which was their main object, and did not care a straw if they made the judicious grieve at being kept waiting to know what was going on in the palace while the pair were philandering on the steps. But all things come to an end—even the overplaying of her part by a saucy young actress—and Miss Rosemary had at last to make way for the great scene at the banquet, where the Doge is so nearly drinking the poisoned goblet, and *Farina* is denounced and flies to the roof, before a hundred swords that have leapt from their scabbards at the suggestion of his treason, and *Bianca* is denounced as his accomplice and the enemy of her father and the state.

The injudicious as well as the judicious made common cause in their reception of this series of effects, and poor Miss Rosemary and the comic gondolier were fairly forgotten in the *furor* that followed. Once more May was called to the front, and had to embarrass herself by collecting all the bouquets thrown at her feet, including the little one which upon such occasions always sticks in a foot-light and is not seen till the last moment. Never had May looked more lovely than now. She had, as I have hinted, been wonderfully costumed throughout; but in her ball dress, with its 'gloss of satin and glimmer of pearl,' all white, she looked every inch a Doge's daughter and a great deal more. 'Something between a Doge's daughter and an angel,' said Colonel Jericho, with affected cynicism, from the stalls; but there were many in all parts of the house who applied the description of 'angel' unreservedly.

It was rather sad to see and hear—but the sensation leap from the roof of the palace, in the next scene, brought down quite as much ap-

plause as May's acting in the banquet-hall. But this was a passing aberration on the part of a sanely-appreciating audience. There were even stronger effects to come on the part of May; and the scene between her and her lover in the dungeon of the State Inquisition, and the unexpected expression, to the State Inquisitors, of her belief in his innocence, was another great triumph. And when she is able to prove the truth of her position, and to denounce the real evil-doers—who are apparently reputable people, and include the coquettish countess played by Mrs. Vallance—May was more triumphant than ever; and when *Farina* is released and received with honours, and the Doge gives her to him as his bride, she is even more triumphant than before.

It is of no use going on with a play after such a crisis as this; so 'Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge,' here came to a conclusion; and the plaudits at the end were, if possible, more enthusiastic than they had been during the progress of the piece. There was a perfect avalanche of bouquets this time, and May was so embarrassed with her burden that the little one in the footlight was nearly being neglected altogether. But May returned for it in time, and this very natural movement was made a pretext for another round, in the midst of which the actress effected her escape behind the curtain.

When Mr. Mole announced that the play would be repeated every evening until further notice there was a concluding burst of applause; and if that worthy gentleman had made an amendment upon the conditional form, and for the words 'until further notice' substituted the words 'for ever,' nobody would have been astonished, and some jocular enthusiast in the pit would probably have moved a rider providing for the addition of 'and a day.'

In fact, as you see, there never was such a success upon the British stage as that of Miss Mirabel as *Bianca*, in 'Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge.'

CHAPTER XXIV.

SUPPER AT THE SHERIDAN.—LOVE IN A CLUB.

The private opinion expressed by our friends in the stalls and boxes, at the conclusion of the performance, was as unequivocal as the public display; but they did not wait long to talk in the lobbies. The men for the most part went away to clubs. Windermere seemed uncertain as to his destination, and Highjinks helped him out of his difficulty.

'Don't go to that hole in St. James's Square,' said he, alluding irreverently to an establishment of a service character to which Windermere belonged. 'Come with me to the Sheridan—a much better place for supper, and where you will meet half the men who have been here.'

Highjinks meant by 'the men,' himself and a score or so of his intimate friends.

Windermere, in an absent manner, assented, and the two were two minutes afterwards bowling off in a hansom to the club in question, which was rather out of the usual club neighbourhood, being on the wrong side of Charing Cross, and not a hundred miles from Covent Garden.

The Sheridan occupied a house which did not look much like a club. It was outwardly undistinguished from its neighbours by architectural pretensions; and the interior was remarkable rather for comfort than splendour. It was a kind of club that, as its members said, 'had no nonsense about it.' There was something of the 'rough and tumble' character in its arrangements, and on that account it was one of the most exclusive in London. The amount of blackballing there was something horrible; and it was frequently necessary, as Highjinks explained, 'because fellows here do as they like, and they can't do as they like if they are afraid of one another.' So nobody was let into the Sheridan unless he seemed likely to prove a congenial spirit and was well backed up. The members had no objection to a man being a

swell, but it was held that he must be something more than a mere swell to belong to the Sheridan; and any man of rank or high position who did not 'waive a something of his claim' in favour of pleasant companionship was considered a bore and treated accordingly. Nobody went into the club for the sake of any social distinction that it might bring them. 'They must get that before they come here,' said Highjinks, in the course of his explanation of the character of the club to Windermere, 'and when they are here they must not brag about it.' Accordingly the members of the Sheridan, whether idle men or busy men—whether literary, or military, or dramatic, or legal, or what not—were expected to have a common bond of union—that of being sociable and interested in the arts. Such at least was the idea of the institution; but, as is sure to happen in such a case, there were discordant elements at work. Some men forgot the common ground, and wanted to keep as much as possible to a class. One set thought the literary element should prevail; another were in favour of giving that honour to the dramatic element; a third were for a mingling of the two, and objected to what they called outsiders. The 'outsiders' also had a set of their own; and the latter, it was stoutly contended by enthusiastic men who had belonged to the place from the first, 'wanted to destroy the character of the club.' Moderate men, who belonged as much to one class as another, ridiculed all these sensibilities, and were quite content to take the Sheridan as they found it—as a common ground where men of different pursuits, or no pursuits at all, might meet with more freedom than elsewhere, and preferred so to meet, as was proved by the fact that half the members of the Sheridan belonged to the best clubs in London, for the usual reasons that make men belong to the best clubs in London, but went most often to the Sheridan for the best of all reasons—because they liked it. The great attraction of the Sheridan—the congeniality of its members taken for

granted—seemed to lie in the fact it was all smoking-room. Not that members smoked in every part of the house—though there was very little restriction in this respect, but the *tone* of the smoking-room prevailed everywhere at the Sheridan, and at any time in the day. I am not sure that this was quite desirable from a family point of view; but this point of view is not that by which the Sheridan should be judged. It was quite as harmless in its diversions as other clubs, only a little more candid.

But why bore the reader with the peculiarities of the Sheridan? Our business—or rather our pleasure—lies with the company there assembled on the evening in question. It was a large one, as it was sure to be after a new play at any of the theatres, and included most of the 'elements' which were supposed by austere members, inspired by traditions of the foundation, to conflict—but which did not conflict at all for social purposes.

In the supper-room—the great resort at that time of night—the majority of the men were of course taking supper, and this they took principally at one common table, while they talked with the freedom that comes from the consciousness that there are no listeners—in the invidious sense of the term—no *répétiteurs*, in fact, who would retail the conversation elsewhere, or would look upon it from a severe elevation, or go out of their way in any other manner to make themselves disagreeable.

And the conversation? Well, it was not all brilliant, and still less all profound; and I would not venture to describe it by illustration in a general way. But it was hearty, genial, and decidedly gay; and what more would you have at a supper after the theatre?

Highjinks soon made Windermere free of the place—that is to say, he introduced him to half a dozen men sitting near them, and told him that he need not mind talking to anybody, introductions being unnecessary at the Sheridan, where everybody was supposed to know everybody else. But Windermere

somehow was not disposed to talk. He was one of the best-humoured fellows going; but for reasons known to himself—or not known, as the case might be—he was abstracted, and by no means up to the Sheridan mark. In vain did Highjinks try to draw him out; the thing could not be done, so Highjinks tempered his own natural vivacity and became by degrees almost as dull as his guest.

I have said that the conversation was genial and gay. Perhaps I was too general in my description. There must be light and shade in painting, and analogous differences in music, to make harmony in either case; and the same condition applies to conversation, where the main difference required is difference of opinion—to the extent at least of qualification. This is an essential, otherwise conversation would stop like a play in which the father gave away the disputed daughter at the beginning instead of at the end.

There was difference of opinion expressed upon this occasion in reference to most of the subjects discussed, as must happen where there are two or three persons who are determined not to agree with anybody else. There were always some of these to be found at the Sheridan, and notable among them to-night was Wilmington Eaglet, that young Satanic poet who was found gibbering on the jetty after the dinner at the Star and Garter. He had not since been in public until his appearance at the theatre, and was now pleasantly congratulated upon his appreciation of Mr. Mandeville's hospitality—the general opinion being that however many Richmonds there might have been in the field, he had certainly seen two of them. Not, however, that Mr. Eaglet was sensitive about small jests of the kind. A poet—he always spoke of himself abstractedly as a poet—was, he considered, privileged beyond common men, and nothing that he could do, except write bad poetry, ought in his opinion to be a subject for reproach. He allowed himself a great deal of latitude in many respects, indeed, and lived up to his allowance in a thoroughly liberal spirit.

But in matters of dispute he was seldom personally offensive; for he never condescended to small subjects, but confined his attacks for the most part to great works which some of the Sheridans had not read, and great men who were certainly not present, and whose defence was never seriously undertaken except by a few late lingerers—to whom, by-the-way, Eaglet always gave a fair chance, being late enough himself for the purpose. But just now, between the men who did not care to argue with him, and the men who did not know how—for to some he was entirely unintelligible—he was having nearly all the talk to himself. And what was more, he showed every symptom of going on; for he was discussing champagne and seltzer with characteristic copiousness, and growing neglect of the weaker fluid; and the manner in which he could abuse books and men under these conditions was a charming study for his friends.

Among those to whom he was utterly incomprehensible was Mr. Patterton, the celebrated low comedian, who was trying to take a tranquil supper after his exertions in the part of *Slasher*—in ‘*Slasher versus Clatter*’—while talking *coulisses* in a low tone with Colonel Jericho.

‘If he goes on I shall go off,’ said Mr. Patterson, ‘and see how the Stargazers are looking.’

The Stargazers was not, as might be supposed, a society for the study of astronomy, but a set of men who met on certain nights of the week at a neighbouring hotel with convivial objects.

Colonel Jericho, who, unlike Mr. Patterton, got a glimpse of meaning out of Mr. Eaglet’s conversation, did not like it any the better on that account, and said he should be happy to go to the Stargazers also if he could be taken—he was not himself a member.

Mr. Patterson promised to introduce him, and hastened to bring his supper to a conclusion preparatory to departure, when a turn was given to the proceedings by the appearance of an addition to the party.

‘This is like relief coming to a

besieged garrison on the point of starvation,’ whispered Highjinks to Windermere; ‘here are a couple of men who will never let anybody be more conspicuous than themselves if they can help it. I like, too, to see Dulcimer and Eaglet in the same room, because then I know one of them will go.’

‘Why go?—and who is Dulcimer?’ asked his friend, not, however, apparently much interested in either inquiry.

‘Why, because they are dead cuts, and will not stay in the same room together. Who’s Dulcimer? Don’t you know the name of Dulcimer Larkall? He writes novels and poetry and all sorts of things. But though his poetry is poetic he does not call himself a poet, and never writes verse—nor prose, indeed—in earnest; so he has a great advantage over Eaglet, having the best possible temper, while Eaglet has none at all. I said that when they met in the same room one of them always went away, but it’s nearly always Eaglet. He’s going now, you see.’

And sure enough, as soon as Eaglet saw Mr. Dulcimer Larkall enter, he rose from the table, and in as defiant and insulting a manner as he could assume towards the obnoxious individual, marched out of the room.

When he had departed there was, by general consent, a slight demonstration of applause, which, it is to be hoped, did not reach the ears of the poet, who could scarcely have reached the bottom of the stairs at the time.

Mr. Dulcimer Larkhall laughed a loud, careless laugh, and strode to the table in a piratical manner, ordering the waiter to take away Mr. Eaglet’s champagne and seltzer bottles with the air of having captured a fort, and intending to make a clean sweep of the garrison. He was a tall, broad, bold, handsome, fair-haired man, and contrasted curiously with his companion, a small, agile-looking person, with black, twinkling eyes, and an expression of face principally remarkable for acuteness. As if to make up for Mr. Eaglet’s absence, they both began to talk together, one being about

as off-hand in his ways as the other, which is saying a great deal.

'Who is the little man?' asked Windermere of Highjinks, rather amused at the aggressive manners of the pair.

'The little man,' replied Highjinks, 'is a great man in his own estimation. He is Mr. Plantagenet Badger, of journalistic fame. At present he is engaged, conjointly with Dulcimer Larkhall, in the editorship of "The Swell." You have heard of "The Swell," surely?'

'Yes—take it in—good deal of it very clever—some of it awful stuff. But I thought it was all written by dukes and marquises. There is certainly not an article in it that seems to come from anybody under the rank of a baronet; and every man writes as if he had at least ten thousand a year, and would not recognize people with only five thousand. And the writers seem to take it for granted that their readers have the same rank and riches.'

'Ah! that's their fun. They once had a contribution from an Honourable, I believe. It wasn't bad, but the Honourable wouldn't go on, or rather could not be depended upon when wanted; so it was found easier for Dulcimer and Plantagenet to do the work themselves, which they do with a few contributions from a set of men going about who write for everything. Perhaps it's the latter who write the rubbish.'

Meanwhile Messrs. Larkhall and Badger were disporting themselves with an easiness that some of the men found hard to bear, though they preferred it to the arbitrary dictation of Mr. Eaglet. The new comers at least made themselves at home with the society; and one sign of the change was that Colonel Jericho and Mr. Patterson did not go over to the Stargazers. But Dulcimer and Plantagenet—I love, like Mr. Highjinks, to call them by their more imposing names—could not go on talking very long without offending somebody's susceptibilities; and the occasion was not long in coming.

'Has anybody seen the new actress to-night?' asked Dulcimer,

with the air of a commanding officer addressing his regiment in a hollow square—Dulcimer's assurance was delightful. A few men of the many who had seen the actress assured him of the fact on their own parts, and the conversation again turned upon Miss Mirabel. Loud praises were heard on all sides, and then came the turn of the two or three gentlemen who never agreed with anybody. One of them—a severely intellectual-looking person, with his hair brushed off his forehead, to make it apparent that he had brains—listened to the commendation with a satirical smile, and then declared his own opinion that Miss Mirabel was, without reservation, the very worst actress that had ever appeared on the British stage.

The majority of the men only laughed at this. It was only Carpingford's way, they said—he did not mean it.

But Mr. Carpingford did mean it, he insisted; and, by way of proving his position, he treated them, or attempted to treat them, to the æsthetic grounds upon which he formed his opinion. I say attempted, because he was not allowed to say very much, being continually interrupted by clamour. His objections, however, seemed really to resolve themselves into the fact that Miss Mirabel was not Mrs. Siddons; and Carpingford, who claimed to have heard the latter lady upon one occasion, would never admit that there had been a real actress on the stage since her time. He planted himself always, in his views of the drama, upon the traditions of the 'palmy days' when people were supposed to have waited at the pit-door of Drury Lane from two o'clock in the day, and dictated public opinion from their places when they arrived inside—a period with which he could not have been familiar except as a very small boy. But Carpingford, whether the drama, or literature, or politics were concerned, took his stand upon the *antiquas vias* with such pertinacity as to proclaim 'no thoroughfare' to passengers not proceeding in his direction.

Carpingford had a subaltern—every man of any intellectual calibre

has a subaltern—who supported him in all he said. But Crawlinton was not received at the club with even the same consideration as Carpingford; for Carpingford's opinions were at least his own. Crawlinton was a younger man, and a mild edition of Carpingford in point of appearance; and he was a person of such abject instincts in the way of opinions, that people wondered how he ever got into the club. But all sorts of people get into all sorts of clubs by accident, when the black-balling element happens to fall short; and so Crawlinton happened to get into the Sheridan.

'I only wish he had to put up here again,' said Dulcimer, aside, to Plantagenet; 'wouldn't some of us keep him out? One can stand Carpingford's nonsense because we know he's in earnest; but when this fellow backs him up I feel very much inclined to make short work of him.'

This was quite an unprejudiced opinion on the part of Dulcimer, who knew nothing of the new actress; but as for blackballing Crawlinton if he were put up again, the idea was no novelty at the Sheridan, as regarded any member. For it was frequently said that if the entire club, intimate associates, and in many cases intimate friends, as its members were, was put up for re-election by ballot, scarcely half a dozen of the number would gain re-admission.

Crawlinton, as you see, did not carry weight in the club, and when he ventured to reinforce Carpingford's censure of Miss Mirabel, he experienced not only the usual neglect which attended his reflected opinions, but heard somebody saying to him, in a very clear and decided voice—

'And pray, sir, what do you know about it?'

The voice was that of Windermere, who was growing angry at the hostile criticism of Carpingford, but saw that he had no right to quarrel with a man for what seemed an honest opinion; and so he vented his wrath upon the subaltern, whose

advocacy he instinctively appreciated.

Mr. Crawlinton was not accustomed to be challenged in such a manner; for the members of the Sheridan took him for granted, and took very little notice of him beyond that concession; so he looked confused and particularly uncomfortable, and said something about having a right to his own opinion—looking at Carpingford at the same time as if for protection. Windermere was not appeased at the rejoinder, and was about to pursue the attack—which was quite unjustifiable, by-the-way, and especially so considering that Windermere was present in the character of a guest—when Highjinks interposed, and recalled him to a sense of the proprieties.

There was an awkward pause, and then Mr. Plantagenet Badger thought he would make things pleasant—the result being, as was the frequent fate of this gentleman's attempts in that direction, that he made things precisely the reverse. He had an easy way of designating people in a familiar manner, ladies in particular, and he did so now in the case of Miss Mirabel, whose professional claims he thought fit to espouse.

'I have not seen Mary on the stage,' he remarked; 'but I have seen her off it, and would swear till all's blue that she's a beautiful girl; and I am quite prepared to believe what Mandeville told me, that she will make a splendid actress. Have you heard, by-the-by, that Mary is married, but has run away from her husband?'

There was 'Oh, oh!' at this from a dozen voices; and a chorus of 'Come, come, Plantagenet, don't begin to scandalize here—keep that for the "Swell."' And then somebody asked, with a *bonâ fide* desire for information, 'Is her name Mary?—There is no Christian name given in the bills.'

'Not that I am aware of,' was the careless answer; 'but most girls are named Mary, or used to be, so I give her the benefit of the chance. If I have called her by the wrong name you must blame Man-

deville, who should have told us the right one.'

Mr. Badger's friends were not surprised at this little piece of playfulness on the part of a gentleman who thought nothing of speaking of a royal princess as 'Polly.' But one of the persons did not take the joke. This was Windermere, as you may suppose. He rose angrily, and Highjinks, fearing a 'scene,' endeavoured to make him resume his seat.

'Nonsense, man,' said Windermere. 'I know I am your guest, and the guest of the club—but I won't stay—there is no occasion for me to take you with me—and before I go I wish to let this gentleman know that I am leaving on account of his impertinence.'

'By Jove!' remarked Colonel Jericho, 'if we all went away on account of that we might hold our meetings in a sentry-box. But you are clearly in the wrong, Badger. You are not justified in talking of a young lady in the way you have done, even though she happens to be on the stage; and if this gentleman—our visitor, remember—is a friend of hers—'

'Is he a friend?' interrupted Badger; 'if so I am of course very sorry to have talked such nonsense.'

But Windermere was obliged to own that he had not the honour of being a friend of Miss Mirabel's—an admission which induced the rejoinder from Badger of 'Well, in that case I have a right to talk nonsense about the lady if I please, and don't see that this gentleman has a right to interfere.'

This made Windermere more angry, and a 'scene' of a lively character seemed impending. The majority of the men, however, notwithstanding the weakened position of the visitor, gave him their support, and bullied Badger so effectually that he was induced to apologise, and not only withdraw the 'Mary,' but admit that the story about the matrimonial relations of the lady was one to which he attached no kind of credence, as he had heard it from a man who was the worst possible authority in Lon-

don. So Windermere was obliged to be satisfied, and the 'scene' was laughed off. But Windermere was ill at ease, and left soon after with his friend.

When they were in the street Highjinks remarked—

'Come, confess, my boy, you made a mistake in interfering. What Plantagenet said was in awfully bad taste, but *you* had no authority to be Miss Mirabel's champion, and strangers were not to know the state of your feelings, which I of course found out before you left the theatre.'

Windermere did not care to justify his conduct, and noticed only the last words.

'Good heaven!' he exclaimed, 'I have betrayed myself. Well, I will confess to you as my friend, and one in whose honour I can confide, that from the first moment I beheld Miss Mirabel—'

And here Windermere, making a pause upon the pavement—happily deserted by this time—launched into such a strain of eulogy in reference to the young lady in question as will scarcely bear repeating. What he said would simply sound ridiculous to any person not possessed by the same inspiration. There is a certain occupied state of the heart which will not allow of literal accuracy in the description of its tenant, and avowals made under such conditions are ill calculated to bear the ordeal of acute criticism. In more direct terms, it may be said that a man who is in love is very apt, when let loose upon the subject, to say things which convey the impression that he is a donkey; and even if he be a donkey, as sometimes happens, there is no need to make all the world acquainted with the fact.

Highjinks, who was the soul of good-nature, listened to Windermere's confidences in a kindly and sympathising spirit, and went out of his way in more senses than one to do so; for he walked with his friend all the way to Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, whereas his own chambers—as became a writer of burlesques—were in the Temple.

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**STUDIES FROM LIFE AT THE COURT OF ST. JAMES'S.
LADY FEODORE WELLESLEY.**

Drawn by the late George H. Thomas. Engraved by William L. Thomas.

ON THE FRENCH STAGE.

II.

THE theatres of Paris are subjected to an impost from which our own playhouses are free. There exists in that capital an institution, called the *Assistance Publique*, which is very wealthy in respect both to income, cash, and landed property. Indeed it need be so; for it relieves the poor of the metropolis, maintains hospitals—many in the country as well as in town—besides accomplishing other good works. Thus, at Berck, a seaside village not far from Montreuil-sur-Mer, there is a hospital for the reception of scrofulous children, entirely supported by the *Assistance Publique*. Its outlay, therefore, is enormous; and so also is its revenue.

Now, one of the items of its income is, the tenth part of the gross receipts of all the theatres in Paris. Every night, every theatre, great or small, lyrical or dramatic, farcical or spectacular, is obliged to set aside the tenth part of the money taken, to swell the funds of the *Assistance Publique*. It may be imagined that this heavy exaction has given rise to no little grumbling. M. Jules Claretie complains of it in his '*Vie Moderne au Théâtre*,' to whose interesting pages we again recur. Now that there is free trade in theatres—although there is not free-trade in dramatic literature; the mason may build the theatre as he likes, but the author may not construct his piece as he wills, or at least not have it played as he constructed it—why not suppress this impost, which is commonly known as the *droit des pauvres*, 'the rightful share of the poor?' It is a direct tax on the managers, who are not always rich; and on the poor themselves, who go to the play like everybody else. If the opening of a theatre is as much a commercial enterprise as other trades are, why continue this tax, which compels the manager to raise, by the same amount, the price of places, which are his merchandise? For a long time past the theatre has ceased to be regarded as

a culpable and wicked trade, and can well dispense with the imposition of this *denier de rachat*, or 'penny of redemption,' formerly laid upon it by the Church, 'because it drew away the people from divine service, and thereby diminished the amount of almsgiving.' This right, now enjoyed by the hospitals, is quite a feature of the middle ages. It is a veritable vassalage which the Revolution had abolished, and which has been re-established, like so many other things.

For a long while the price of a place in the pit of the Comédie-Française was forty-four sous. Why forty-four, and not the round number forty? Because the right to the tenth of the gross receipts accorded to the *Assistance Publique* plainly forced the theatre to raise its prices by a tenth. It is evident that if the hospitals thus get a million (of francs) per annum out of the theatres (and they receive more than that—nearly two), it absolutely comes out of the public's pocket. 'Charity,' says M. Claretie, 'is a good and admirable thing, but I should not be sorry (and many people think as I do) to practise my liberalities myself.'

He here hits the nail on the head. For then comes the question, 'What would become of the hospitals and the poor if they were dependent on the spontaneous liberalities thus offered?' The probability is that the one would soon be closed, and the other starved. France is not a land of establishments or enterprises supported by voluntary contributions. In all those kind of things, not only must the initiative be taken by some authority, but some authority must keep them going. The French themselves avow this weakness, and occasionally make fruitless attempts to get over it. They expect useful and charitable institutions to be provided for them by the State, as children expect their daily meals from their parents' hands. The French people will

subscribe to little which does not promise to pay a handsome dividend. Thus, poor M. Gustave Lambert (in all probability luckily for him and his crew) cannot fit out his expedition to go and take possession of the North Pole in the name of France, for want of a miserable hundred thousand francs (4000*l.*), which would be raised in London in a day, if he and his scheme found favour in the eyes of Londoners. Whereas, although M. Lambert has been lecturing for months all over the country, encouraged by savants and supported by the press, the francs won't come in, and he strives in vain to start on his arctic voyage and get frozen to death. At the commencement of this very year (1870), an attempt was made to relieve the theatres of their payments to the *Assistance Publique*; but the legislature, fearing the consequences, negated the application. To us it seems a curious and paradoxical contradiction to subsidise a theatre, like the Français and others, with the public money, and then to tax their receipts for the support of public charities.

There is another special impost which calls for reform; namely, the impost of privileged boxes and administrative free admissions. Certain boxes in the Théâtre-Français, which ought to bring in something like thirty thousand francs (1200*l.*) a year, are absolutely unproductive. The evil would be less if the persons to whom they 'belong' always made a point of occupying them themselves. But how often is the box of a Minister of State crowded with strange-looking spectators, whom one cannot suppose to have very close connections with the governing body. Some of these boxes are *personal*; and the abuse is so deeply rooted that it will require great efforts to prevent its remaining eternal. Thus, after the *Coup d'Etat*, M. de Morny, on whom almost everything depended, exonerated the Comédie-Française from the payment of their yearly rent. In testimony of their gratitude to the all-powerful minister, the comedians then agreed to offer him a box, or a *baignoire*, for life.

M. de Morny accepted, and the *baignoire* was his, as long as he lived. But at his death a difficulty arose. The President of the Corps Législatif very naturally claimed M. de Morny's box; and they had all the trouble in the world to explain that the *baignoire* was (in administrative phrase) personally the count's—or the duke's—and not by any means intended for all future Presidents of the Corps Législatif in *secula seculorum*.

The Théâtre-Français and the Comédie-Française are one; but the former term is more applicable to the present building, the latter to the institution, the company, the society, which is a body of artists of tolerably long standing. It was Voltaire who enfranchised the theatre, and the actors themselves, from all kinds of servitude. To him they owe the destruction of the absurd prejudice which banished them from society. Compare the theatre in 1718, when he started with his 'Odipe,' with the theatre in 1778, when he died.

In the Rue de l'Ancienne-Comédie, nearly opposite the Café Procope, may be still seen a tall house whose façade, in 1718, was that of the Comédie-Française. The Tragic Muse lodged there at the bottom of a yard, in an old tennis-court. A very poor theatre was that! An ill-swept pit, almost muddy, without seats or benches, where the small folk (Shakespeare's groundlings) stood and stared with wondering eyes at the tasteless scenery on the stage; which stage was crowded throughout the whole of its length by *elegants*, strutting about, chatting, laughing, spitting, and interrupting the actors at every instant. And what wretched actors, pompous in their declamation, yet bowing low before the *roués* who thus took the boards by storm, but making the unhappy authors, in revenge, pay dearly for their humiliations. See Le Sage's chapter on comedians in 'Gil Blas.'

Sixty years afterwards the reform was complete. No more fashionable idlers on the stage; the actors playing naturally, and not absurdly costumed—not, as formerly, dress-

ing Greek and Roman parts with feathers in their hats; the actresses interpreting their tragic parts without hoops; the scenery renewed; the stage filled, not by the one single confidant, but by groups of people—by groups, a thing unknown on the French stage!—and the Comédie itself, quitting the tennis-court and the house in the Rue des Fossés-Saint-Germain, and transported to the Tuileries, into the heart of the king's palace, into the machine-room, where fourteen years later the Convention will sit.

Voltaire, by thus elevating and purifying the theatre, by transforming the boards into a tribune, restored comedians to their proper place, at the same time that he reformed Comedy. The crowd no longer considered the interpreters of Voltaire's dramatic works as mere buffoons. His theatre was not an emotion-shop, but a school of philosophy in which the actors were the teachers. And what feverish excitement there was in those Voltairean tragedies! What a striking thing (even in the narrow point of view of dramatic skill) is the fourth act of 'Rome Sauvée,' in which Voltaire, forestalling and outdoing the innovations of the romancists, puts the whole Roman Senate in their costume on the stage, grouped around the tribune from which Cicero was about to speak! It was a new manifestation of dramatic art. It was a revolution in the theatre made by Voltaire; nay, even more than that, it was the Revolutionary Theatre which he invented.

It is an error to suppose that he completely despised Shakespeare, at the same time that he borrowed from his works. Voltaire fully admits Shakespeare's genius. Even while speaking of his defects (in the 'Dictionnaire Philosophique'), he classes him, in his admiration, by the side of Newton and Frederick II. Now, for Voltaire, Newton was what is most sublime in human nature. The truth is that Voltaire has translated and copied very little indeed from Shakespeare. No works are so personal, so thoroughly French as his. There is something of the Roman in Corneille; of the

Athenian in Racine: Voltaire was French to the backbone. Hence his enormous influence on his time.

Hamlet, as now performing at the Grand Opera, is no more Shakespeare, than Rossini's 'Otello,' or Bellini's 'I Montecchi ed i Capuletti' are Shakespeare; but serious translations and adaptations of Shakespeare have found favour in Parisian theatres. One of the most recent is 'Hamlet,' at the Gaîté, with Madame Judith as the Prince of Denmark. We may call this a highly successful reading, rather than an actual impersonation; for the fact is that the assumption by a woman of a male *dramatis persona* completely destroys all illusion. The reality (often not stern) is too self-evident. The interest taken by the public in such exhibitions is anything but purely dramatic. 'Breeches parts'—as they used to be called in green-room slang—are mostly pretexts for the display of pretty feet and legs. They are accorded conventionally, in opera, to the fair possessors of contralto voices; but nobody ever accepted Albani in imagination, while singing her famous Brindisi, for Lucretia Borgia's son. Apart from the inevitable drawback of incongruous sex, Madame Judith, who made a great impression, played the part as few men could play it.

Whether the Parisian public is more uncertain than other publics in its likes and dislikes would be hard to say; but playgoers remember that, whereas Madame Judith could find a great theatre in which to recite a Shakesperian character with applause, Rouvière (since dead, and now admitted to have been a great artist), who interpreted Hamlet, not only with talent, but, at certain points, with genius, was ridiculed, criticised, and, worst of all, treated with implacable indifference. Poor fellow! To play his Hamlet, he was obliged to betake himself to little theatres, at Belleville or the Beaumarchais, surrounded by wretched actors and figurants, who grinned and understood nothing of the demon by whom he was possessed. He was almost mad with the passion for his art.

He would discourse eloquently of the under-currents concealed in certain 'parts,' and of the far-reaching scope of master-pieces like Hamlet. But the theatre did not find him bread; he lived by painting and selling pictures of very inferior merit. That was his *trade*, while his ambition was Art. His whole thoughts and wishes were devoted to being *understood* as an actor, and that in Hamlet. But how many readers, spectators, and thinkers can say that they quite understand Hamlet to their own satisfaction? Not a few take it as they find it, without troubling their heads further about it.

Apropos to Hamlet, M. Alexandre Dumas, sen., has tried to prove that his *dénouement* of the tragedy—that performed at the Théâtre-Historique—was better and much more logical and philosophical, more dramatic than Shakespeare's. What could that Englishman be thinking about? Why didn't he take lessons of the author of 'Antony'? This is how M. Dumas makes the play finish. After the duel between Laertes and Hamlet, the prince, striking the king, forces him at the same time to drink the poison, when the ghost of his murdered father suddenly appears, and stepping up to each of the personages of the drama, sentences them to an irrevocable doom. 'Laertes, pray and die!' says the royal shade to Ophelia's brother. To the queen, 'Gertrude, hope and die!' To the guilty king, 'Despair and die!' When Hamlet, trembling, remains alone with the spectre, he asks, in terror,

'Father, what punishment awaits me?'
'Live!'

It was in this way that poor Rouvière had to play Hamlet seven or eight years ago. Respecting that *dénouement*, M. Claretie remarks that, to condemn Hamlet to live, is absolute nonsense. Hamlet was not born a *liver*. He is a creature who must necessarily sink under the weight of sorrow. His feigned madness is too much for his nerves. His constitution is weakly; he is an invalid. Crushed by the terrible task he has to accomplish, he neces-

sarily disappears as soon as it is done. Whatever Alexandre Dumas the Elder may say, we cannot conceive Hamlet reigning, wearing a crown on his head, with Horatio for prime minister. It is not the sceptre, but Yorick's skull, which finds its proper place in that feeble hand. M. Dumas, therefore, will permit us to prefer to his version the eloquent and respectful translation published by M. Paul Meurice. His Hamlet is Shakespeare's Hamlet, translated as a labour of love.

M. Claretie has an observation which is new. Victor Hugo is often reproached with intruding himself personally into his dramas, with speaking in the place of his personages, with coming forward, he the poet, here under the doublet of Charles-Quint, there under the cloak of Triboulet. In any case, he has to bear the reproach in very good company. It may be addressed to Shakespeare with equal justice. What, in fact, is the famous soliloquy, 'To be, or not to be,' but a private thought, a personal reverie of Shakespeare, put into Hamlet's lips?

Hamlet asks himself whether there are not dreams in the last sleep; whether, in that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns, there is not something after death. But, in truth, he, Hamlet, has no right to entertain the slightest doubt about the matter, since he has conversed with the ghost face to face. Whether the spectre be a spirit of health or a goblin damn'd, whether he bring with him airs from heaven or blasts from hell, is of no consequence whatever; the ghost exists, its voice has been heard, it has been *seen*, doomed for a certain time to walk the night. Why then does he talk of 'perchance to dream! Ay, there's the rub.' Rabellais's grand *peut-être* is for him a reality, and the young man ought certainly not to hesitate. But, at that moment, it is not he who speaks, but Shakespeare. It is not Hamlet, who, while meditating on death, pauses in the dread of something after death, and consents to bear the ills he has

rather than fly to others that he knows not of. It is the poet himself; and Hamlet's soliloquy is nothing but a wail of mental agony escaped from Shakespeare. There are also passages in the 'Tempest' which are open to the same remark.

King Lear, at the Odéon, imitated in verse by M. Jules Lacroix, was also a Shakesperian success in Paris. The same gentleman had also made a scrupulous translation of Macbeth, and not an adaptation. Lear is the eternal drama of family affections, rivalries, and crimes. Never did tragic poet carry horror to such a pitch as this. The antique fatality, put on the stage by Sophocles, had not the same savage and sinister character. Edipus, blind, abandoned by his sons, dies calm and majestic, leaning on his daughters' shoulders. At the point of death he blesses them and touches them with his trembling hands. Lear, after suffering like Edipus, has a far more agonising and miserable end. He is not resigned, but dies protesting. His last sigh is not, like Edipus's, a prayer, but a malediction. His Antigone, namely Cordelia, is not beside him, living, devoted; she is in his arms, breathless, dead.

The murder of Cordelia is a supreme atrocity which brings this terrible play to a most distressing end. Such a *dénouement* has appeared so frightful to some, that that they have felt obliged to correct and soften it. In the time of Charles II., when so many old pieces were remodelled, there was a strong desire that the life of Lear's innocent daughter should be saved. Tate and Colman made this metamorphosis in the great poet's work, adding a happy marriage, after the French fashion. They made Edgar (Gloucester's son) Cordelia's lover. Dr. Johnson approved the change, and Garrick played the piece thus accommodated to the taste of the times.

M. Jules Lacroix, in his version, has also made alterations in accordance with his judgment. Beauvallet acquitted himself of this heavy and difficult part with infinite skill. The 'making up' was

admirable; a snow-white beard and long white hair streaming over his shoulders. The character was studied with extreme care. The sudden anger, the hesitations, the weakness of the poor old king, were given with broad and striking accuracy. Terrible in the mad scenes, Beauvallet was irresistibly touching when he crouched before Cordelia's dead body. A word simply murmured into her ear had more effect than all the violent outbursts in the world.

Most of our readers will be aware of the special interest attached, in Paris, to the first performance of a new piece. M. Claretie gives a vivid picture of the scene in his notice of 'Le Roman d'une Honnête Femme'—'The Romance of a Virtuous Wife'—a comedy in three acts, by Madame de Prébois and M. Theodore Barrière, acted at the Théâtre du Gymnase. This piece completely failed before the peculiar public of the first representation, who showed themselves a little severe on a work, badly constructed perhaps, clumsily conducted in certain portions, a singular medley of brutality and sentiment, but also vigorous and wonderfully honest and to the purpose.

The 'Romance of a Virtuous Wife' is, on the whole, a melancholy history, distressingly commonplace, an every-day story, something like the 'Accidents and Occurrences' in newspapers, or a trial before a Court of Probate and Divorce, in three acts. Madame Chabanel (whose Christian name is Eliane), a charming woman, already a mother, who adores her children and does not detest her husband, is the most resigned and neglected of wives. She stops at home like a Roman matron, perhaps also spinning wool, remaining almost a prisoner, whilst Chabanel (who is a druggist, perfumer, or something of the sort) takes his pleasure on the Boulevards, and frequents fashionable restaurants with one Cydalise Gobseck (a young lady no better than she should be) on his arm. One evening when his blood is heated with wine he quarrels with an officer just returned

from China, calls him an imbecile, and receives a box on the ear. The inevitable consequence is a duel. But Chabanel would die of fright before it came off, unless he had resolved to give notice to the police and reckon on the interference of the gendarmerie. But Eliane, who learns the news of the quarrel, knows nothing of her husband's prudent arrangements. In her mind's eye she already sees him wounded, perhaps killed, by the accursed officer, whom she does not know, but whose name and address she contrives to ascertain. Impelled by the affection which every woman feels for the father of her children, she hastens, half out of her senses, to M. Paul de Castellan's domicile.

Now, chance would have it that the captain had very lately travelled in the same railway carriage with Eliane, sitting on the opposite seat, face to face. It seems that he was smitten with her between two stations, electrically, in modern style. He is immensely disconcerted at recognising, in the angel of the railway—whom?—the wife of his adversary. This gives rise to a scene which, to be accepted by the audience, required unusually skillful and delicate treatment. M. de Castellan should have declared, as if in spite of himself, in a bitter or sorrowful exclamation, his love for the fair petitioner. But instead of letting his secret escape him involuntarily, he blurts out at Eliane something like this:

'Eh! madame, it is difficult for me to spare your husband's life.'

'Why so?'

'Because I love you.'

It may be doubted, moreover, whether a passion conceived during a journey of less than an hour, and without M. de Castellan's speaking a word to Eliane, could attain sufficient violence to urge a gentlemanly man to frankness which looks very like violence. The public protested against it; and certainly the public were right. And so it may as well plainly be stated that the character of M. de Castellan is absolutely false, inconsistent and unnatural to the end. We have just seen him as brutal

as a dragoon; he shortly becomes as sentimental as a Werter. But the reader will be able to judge for himself.

The duel takes place. Chabanel has forgotten to put into the post his letter to the police. Obligated to take the sword in hand, he is driven by main force, trembling, to the ground by one of his seconds. M. de Castellan, who has 'sworn to efface with his own blood the words he addressed to Eliane'—you may fancy this an exaggeration, but there it is—this magnanimous captain throws himself on his adversary's sword, and so gets deeply wounded in the chest. He is carried home bleeding, unconscious, and laid at full length on a sofa. 'He has not an hour to live,' is the doctor's verdict. Eliane, in tears, kneels beside the patient, who, recovering his senses, perceives the young wife, makes a second declaration, again tells her that he loves her, and at the same time returns an embroidered handkerchief which she had let fall at her first visit, and which he had ever since treasured next his heart. A little sentimental, that.

'Keep the handkerchief! You will bring it me back when you are cured!'

'Ah! shall I ever be cured? You do not love me!'

'Live then; I love you!'

For people speaking to each other for the second time the conversation is rather warm. In fact it is red-hot Werterism, pure and unadulterated. Eliane, it cannot be denied, is undoubtedly a very virtuous woman. Any other wife, in fact, would have foreseen the probable or possible case of M. de Castellan's recovery, and the complications necessarily resulting from the command 'Live; I love you.' It is not Célestine who would venture to undertake the dangerous office of a Sister of Charity.

As may be expected, M. de Castellan does recover. He returns, restores the handkerchief, and reminds Eliane of the words she murmured in the dying man's ear.

'But I never said that. But you were delirious, monsieur. But you were dreaming!'

Eliane's merit in thus repulsing M. de Castellan is all the greater because she decidedly loves him, and now knows why he fought with Chabanel. The officer—and hence the quarrel—had heedlessly walked on the long train of Cydalise's dress. She is aware of her husband's infidelity and the life of debauchery which he leads.

From that time Chabanel lives separated from his wife, she in Auvergne, he in Paris. Natural enough; nevertheless, one circumstance rather spoils this virtuous wife as a model for others. She has made up her mind to a complete separation, an utter rupture, because Chabanel has been led into frequentation of the Café Anglais. She makes the father a stranger to his children because he has had a few bottles of champagne uncorked! Before the duel she ran all over Paris to save him; after the duel she leaves Paris to get out of his way. This really seems a little severe. Not that a word can be said in excuse of Chabanel.

The portrait of the citizen Lovelace is excellently treated. The public did not understand it, or at least would not accept it, but showed its displeasure. In the last act Chabanel compromised everything. Yet in that lay the whole pith of the piece. The second act cleverly brings forward the preparations for the duel, the farce of the seconds' negotiations; and the house was diverted by the caricature of an American blusterer, experienced in hostile meetings, who threatens to blow out Chabanel's brains if he flinches. But what is that? A Palais-Royal vaudeville gaily treated, nothing more. The third act, on the contrary, is a striking picture, of hard and sombre truthfulness.

The duel has metamorphosed Chabanel. He gives himself airs. The good man has become a hero of the Boulevard, a man *à la mode*. He is no longer Chabanel the druggist; he is 'Chabanel who wounded M. de Castellan.' Chabanel strives to make himself worthy of his reputation; he changes the quiet frock-coat and trousers for the Bismarck-coloured jacket, the tight pantaloons,

and the tiny hat of the fast young gentleman. He sports a camellia in his buttonhole, an imperceptible cane, and the ways of the heroes of private cabinets at restaurants. Though still smelling of the petroleum he retailed the other day, he strives hard to ape the Richelieu. Ruined, however, taken by the throat by necessity, turned into ridicule behind his back by a jade, very hard put to meet certain bills, he starts for Auvergne, and falls like a bomb in the house of his wife. What does he want? Two hundred thousand francs (8000*l.*), his children's fortune, and that to set up the son of an adventuress.

The scene between the husband and wife is violent, and fearlessly written. It made the audience look black. The husband entreats, caresses, humbles himself, makes his confession; and the wife, seized with disgust, speedily grants him what he asks. All this gave great offence. The public of first representations, it must be remarked, is a dragon of virtue, invincible in its puritanism, a sybarite of propriety, complaining of a fold in a moral rose-leaf. Shall we say it, nevertheless? Its grand airs of prudery are often strangely out of place.

With rare exceptions the audiences of first nights are composed of elements which are tolerably muddy and ambiguous in their quality. What is called *Tout Paris*, 'All Paris,' the famous All Paris of intelligence and distinction, is in reality only the Paris of racket and scandal. This public of first representations, which varies very little from one theatre to another, might be made the subject of a curious statistical or, if you like, chemical inquiry. On analysing the divers elements of which it is composed you would not find much of the heroic left at the bottom of the crucible. There was a time when the public of first performances, thoroughly sifted and winnowed, was recruited out of the *élite*. All the thinkers of the town were there. There was no need then to be afraid of addressing the boxes in a language which they would not understand. Count now the boxes which,

on such occasions, are occupied by respectable women. On the contrary, it is come to this, that a respectable woman cannot, without risk, venture to show herself in an *avant-scène*, for fear of being mistaken for one of the *anonymas* who go there, most assuredly not to listen, but to display, in carefully-studied attitudes, their jewellery and their plastered skins.

Two good articles have been written on first representations; one, by Alexandre Dumas, jun., in 'Paris Guide,' is a masterpiece of Parisian spirit, only you detect too plainly the dramatic author who does not are to quarrel with his public. The tip of the ear peeps out; the railery is diplomatic; and the author, who naturally is irony itself, ventures on this tender ground with all the precautions of a skater who does not care to break the ice. Accordingly M. Dumas does not hesitate to affirm that a *lorette*, a frail one, is better to applaud a piece than a great lady, who is always afraid of cracking her gloves. But nobody wants an audience composed of great ladies exclusively. The other article is by Edmond About, who approaches much nearer to the truth, and is consequently very severe. People not received in good society, aspirants, fast men, but few serious observers, are what M. About finds in these special assemblies. It would be easy to discover even worse than that.

All which would be of little consequence if this public of first performances did not exercise on the fortunes of a piece the enormous influence which it is impossible to deny. That public is really the dramatic king-maker, the Warwick of the theatre. There is little or no appeal from its verdict. The 'Mariage d'Olympe,' condemned the first night by this prudish jury more than fourteen years ago, still pays the penalty. This medley, almost dissolute public, wants not to be contradicted, shocked, but caressed and flattered in its weaknesses. It allows you only a certain amount of liberty and boldness, beyond which it protests and takes offence. It loves the sentimentalities which

gently rock its weary and worn-out spirit, like a man who, tired of high-spiced dishes, takes to a diet of buttermilk; it calls for an edulcorated literature, or rather it prefers a soft pillow on which to repose its vices and to sleep in peace.

The third act of the 'Roman d'une Honnête Femme'—to return to it—abrupt and badly put together, is nevertheless one of the boldest things attempted by M. Théodore Barrière, who is not timid. The public took especial offence when Chabanel insults his wife, who gets angry, with praises of his mistress. 'Very well! And what then? You know nothing about the woman. She is at least as much worth having as you are.' The scene may be guessed. It canterises to the quick, like a red-hot iron. Perhaps it might have been more easily accepted if Pradeau had not been charged with the part of the husband. Pradeau is an amusing actor, who has proved in 'Nos Bons Villageois' that he possesses the secret of tears as well as of laughter; but he really is too vulgar in the personage of Chabanel. He still further italicises, by his heaviness, the odious features of the character. Suppose in his place Landrol or any other, extorting from Madame Chabanel the two hundred thousand francs, with perfidy instead of cynicism, the scene would have remained within the limits of serious comedy, and would not have called forth those protestations. Moreover, the ending of the piece is unsatisfactory. Chabanel leaves his wife's house on horseback, and breaks his neck upon the road. Eliane is left a widow, and the virtuous wife can marry M. de Castellan at her leisure.

We must not omit two other important influences bearing on success or failure on the French stage, namely, the *claque* and the *sifflet*. We have no word to express the first—which means a band of hired or organised applauders; and indeed *claque* is not dictionary French, but a sobriquet or slang accepted by all who have anything to do with playgoing. The *sifflet* is literally and practically a small whistle used to express strong disapprobation.

We differ from our Gallic neighbours in several small theatrical particulars. We hiss bad actors with our unassisted tongues and palates; the French hiss them by blowing little whistles, whose sound gives a far keener heart-piercing stab. The French request the repetition of a song by a Latin word, *bis*; they have even formed from it the verb *bisser*, to ask for twice. We express the same desire by the employment of a French word, *encore*. It is singular that neither nation should have thought a word of their own sufficient to answer the purpose.

The right of the public to the whistle or the hiss is a perfectly natural right, long since admitted in some form or another, which the spectator purchases at the same time as his play-ticket. In fact, everybody has a right to complain if the merchandise he has paid for does not suit his taste. The privilege has not seldom been abused for the manifestation of personal likings and dislikes. While Mrs. Jordan, the actress, was living under the protection of the last Duke of York, she felt obliged to dismiss an Irish cook. 'Arrah, by Jasus!' said the angry woman, 'won't I go to the one-shilling gallery, and there I'll hiss your royal highness!' The claque, on the contrary, is an essentially modern institution, and only dates from a few years back. Certainly, the dramatists of the eighteenth century, for instance, to force a success, hired, as Figaro says, 'quelques battoirs,' a few clappers, and paid those auxiliaries with their own hard cash. 'Another triumph like this, and I am a ruined man!' said Dorat, as he came away from the performance of one of his pieces. But *they* might be considered as so many friends recruited and franked in their expenses by the author. You might, up to a certain point, accept the neighbourhood of that enthusiastic cabal, since the public still maintained the right of protesting against its decisions. The packed jury had not yet taken possession of the whole house.

In our days, on the contrary, those irregular troops have been drilled

into regiments, and the claque, previously existing on sufferance, has become sovereign master of the theatre. Dramatic art is literally in the hands of the chief of the claque. He can, at will, cause a piece to fail, or can launch it successfully. He has his share of the receipts, and often the lion's share. He gives his support to managements, paying himself with tickets in which he speculates, and renders the traffic of the dramatic shop still more underhand and repulsive.

As to the men whom he hires to help him, they generally come from nobody knows where; they, and not the gentlemen who write in newspapers, are practically the real theatrical critics. And they know it well. It is singular that, in France (the remark is M. Claretie's), every man installed in any post whatever immediately becomes a *functionary*, struts, swells, and gives himself airs of importance. At the theatre, the claqueur who stuns your ears with his unintelligent clappings, believes himself also clothed with a function, and becomes a perfect jack-in-office. He lays down the law, compels success, crushes any hostile manifestation, insults those who give their opinion, however entitled they may be to give it. He does better, or worse; associating himself with the police, and helping them to do their work.

On one occasion, somebody 'whistled' Mdlle. Silly. The applause and *bisses* of the claque irritated those of the audience who did not think her song amusing. The claqueurs pointed out the guilty whistler to the police, stretching out their arms, vociferating, employing abusive language, and shouting 'A la porte!'—'Turn him out!' So that people admitted gratuitously contrive to turn out those who have paid for their places. The absurdity of the abuse needs no further comment. It would be something, however, if the claqueurs would content themselves with making a noise. But they are quite ready to proceed from insult to personal injury, and have often given proofs of their readiness to do so. The scandalous performances of the 'Cotillon,' eight

or nine years ago, are an instance. M. Claretie has seen *claqueurs* give *fisticuffs* to spectators in the orchestra. Similar outrages occurred at the representations of 'Henriette Maréchal,' at the Théâtre-Français, and of the 'Nouveau Cid' at the Vaudeville, where the *claqueurs* shouted to the whistlers, 'We will wait for you outside!'

In that duel of an author with the public called a first performance, the *claqueurs* play the part of seconds, in conscience; that is, they make matters worse. They indispose the real audience. How many failures are due to the intolerant zeal of these insurers of success! The actors themselves also suffer from it. The *claque* often interrupts an effective situation so completely, that the artist, obliged to stop short at the very height of his passion, and wait for the end of the misplaced salvo, is not unfrequently unable to wind himself up to the same pitch of emotion which he felt before.

It may be said that an attempt has already been made to suppress the *claque*, but that managers found themselves obliged to revive it. The performances were too cold and stiff, scarcely relieved by a hesitating murmur, a little timid applause. At the Théâtre-Français, the *claque* once done away with, the representations in which Madame Rachel took part were the only ones that displayed a little animation. The others went on dully and monotonously from seven in the evening till midnight. The answer is that the public has lost the habit of applauding ever since the *claque* has taken such firm root. The paying spectator would blush to be taken for one of the hired members of the audience. At most, therefore, he ventures to give a sign of approval when the curtain falls on the last scene of a work which has delighted him. The rest of the piece he leaves to the *claqueurs*.

In this way, little by little, passion and excitement, that is to say, life, have disappeared from amongst Parisian audiences. The performances are methodically regulated,

according to a sort of ritual, and tears burst forth at a given minute. The chief of the *claque* undertakes to supply emotion by contract. But it happens that that potentate has his likes or his dislikes, or even his interests; and many an author, because he does not please him, or because his pockets are empty, receives only scanty bravos and feeble approbation. How many pieces have come to grief because the *claque* would not support them! It is sometimes the manager who gives his orders to that effect, sometimes the *claqueurs* themselves, who determine to stifle some innovation. All this is evidently an abuse and a scandal.

A foreigner will hardly suspect the tactics and complete organization of the *claque*, until he has seen the same piece performed two or three times, especially if it is one which is having a run, such as one of the splendid *féeries* which are given at the larger theatres. The applause is repeated just as accurately as the dialogue, the songs, or the groupings of a dance. At such an actor or actress's first entrance, there comes a clap of welcome, from exactly the same part of the house, and doubtless from the same pair of hands which are periodically crossed with silver. Certain points in the performance are italicised in this way, as with an audible note of admiration, to fix the attention of the audience. The *claqueur* is thus the showman of the human menagerie. Singly, moreover, he is judiciously distributed, above, below, and all around. The body of the *claque*, who keep together, are not agreeable neighbours to sit next, nor pleasant to look at. Often shabby, always hardhanded, they go through their drill and do their work; but at other moments than when their service is due, they scarcely pretend to take an interest in the performance.

On one occasion, at the Bouffes-Parisiens, during the performance, a little boy some eight years of age, seated in the *balcon*, stood up at times, and laughing with his hearty, unaffected, childish laugh, applauded as hard as he could with

his little hands. Not that he always applauded the wittiest points of the dialogue, but his countenance expressed such sincere and simple delight, that the audience allowed itself to be carried away, and laughed whenever he laughed. Here we have a race of *claqueurs* who certainly might be utilised. Three or four good-humoured children, placed here and there about the house, would do much for the success of comedies.

As to hissing or the whistle, M. Claretie will not consent to give it up. The public of Paris have renounced the privilege of applauding, but he cannot conceive their being robbed of the whistle. The reign of bad pieces dates from the whistle's exile. The public was found so benevolent, so *debonair*, that authors of late years have thought anything good enough to be set before it. But they will look twice if it gets seriously out of

temper. The whistle would work miracles, even so far as to set theatrical paralytics on their legs. No doubt there is the sentimental side of the question. The whistle may become a murderer. The whistle killed Nourrit; just as criticism killed the French painter Gros and our poet Keats. But Art also has its battle-fields. Must we give up the struggle, for pity's sake? Criticism and the hiss or the whistle have, after all, been the salvation of many others. The actors themselves demand the whistle; they would not altogether lose the screaming spur which puts their blood up. They will tell you that a whistle or a hiss insures their success if they are acting well, and forces them to do better if they are acting badly. The whistle, we may be assured, has never discouraged any but make-believe artists, nor put an end to any but badly-written pieces.



A PREACHMENT ON OLD MAIDS.

SETTLEMENT and a home are the great prizes of life to which every young lady is taught to look forward. From the nursery to her first ball as a young *débutante*, her thoughts are directed to the attainment of a husband. It is taken as a matter of course by anxious mothers that their daughters are quite certain to marry, and the daughters themselves never contemplate any other possibility. All education is based upon that supposition and is carried on with reference to it. Worldly-minded women are on the look-out for eligible 'parties' very early; and when any young man specially commendable for wealth and position makes his appearance in society they are not slow to make his acquaintance and invite him to dinners and balls and breakfasts, hoping to secure him for one of their daughters, who are, of course, charming, as all women naturally are. The daughters themselves know the rent roll of every young man, and receive him accordingly with the deference that is due to wealth. If the mothers of Belgravia are sedulous in attracting to their houses the rich and popular, they expect their daughters to do the rest of the business, and cast their nets over the birds which come to them for crumbs of comfort. The whole affair is conducted very differently abroad. On the Continent young ladies are kept in the background, and are supposed, by a magnificent self-deception, to have no eyes for young men. They do not initiate any conversation, and scarcely do more than answer when they are spoken to. They are dressed simply and sit aloof from the general company. If they are to marry at all it is arranged for them whom they shall marry and when, by their respective parents. The parents of the young lady think that a marriage with the Marquis de Vautrien will suit them exactly, as he has rank and she has money. They hint, they suggest the possibility of such a union; they inquire whether it would be

acceptable, and after a satisfactory result to their well-directed inquiries, the offer is formally made, and Mademoiselle and Monsieur le Marquis are engaged and in due time married. Madame then for the first time appears in society, free to speak, to act, and to think for herself. Whether on the Continent or in England, marriage is the point to which the thoughts, wishes, and hopes of young ladies are directed by nurses, governesses, and mothers. In schools for young ladies, this is especially true, for the confidences of schoolgirls with each other relate, nine times out of ten, to some youth who fills up the vacuum in their affections. A certain interest and importance attach themselves to a girl who is supposed to have a love story; and, on the other hand, one who is not surrounded by any such interest is held very cheap by her fellows. No account is taken of the many unhappy marriages that exist. Homes made miserable by uncongenial tempers brought together by the indissoluble marriage vow; hearts broken by harsh and unkind treatment inflicted with the high authority of a husband; or all household and family duties neglected and unfulfilled; and all domestic peace expelled through the caprice of a wayward, wilful, and selfish wife, are not taken into account by those who for sordid or worldly motives hurry their children into ill-assorted marriages. There is a large amount of matrimonial infelicity of which the Divorce Courts do not and cannot take any cognizance. It is beyond their sphere, outside the circle of their operations; but it, nevertheless, exists. As a general proposition it has been often stated that there is more misery in the world than the world knows. This is especially true of marriage, and it reminds us of an absurd story which was told of a Roman Catholic boy, who, on being examined in his Catechism, replied to the question 'What is Matrimony?' by saying, 'A middle state in which people suffer

for a time on account of their sins.' His confusion between purgatory and matrimony well expresses what must be in the minds of many persons who have made a false move in what is frequently called 'the lottery of life,' and have to lament an ill-assorted marriage, which, if it does not make their life a hell upon earth, has at least converted it into a purgatory.

As the married state is so widely exalted, being set before the minds of all marriageable girls in this legitimate object of their ambition, the idea of being an old maid has become really alarming; and almost every young lady experiences an uncomfortable sensation, which she would be at a loss to describe, when the possibility of being an old maid first dawns upon her mind. The attributes which surround unmarried women of a certain age are anything but pleasing, and, whether true or false, are not calculated to render the state of single blessedness desirable or even palatable to one who looks at it from a distance. Acidity, narrow-mindedness, a biting tongue, love of scandal and gossip are, without much thought, indiscriminately attributed to all spinsters who have passed the Rubicon. Disappointed affection is apt to sour the temper; and any one who has been rash enough to expend her heart's best treasure either upon an unworthy object or without a more than reasonable prospect of an equivalent in return, will probably find herself before long viewing all the aspects of life unfavourably. The shadow which has come across her path will cast a shade over her powers of appreciation; and people and things, and all that pertains to life will lose their brightness, just as in a fog the real and relative proportion of what we see is destroyed by the medium through which we see it. People of sanguine temperament are said to look through coloured glass, because they invest everything with the bright colours of their own imagining; and people of a gloomy, discontented spirit distort all that they look upon and create for themselves miseries which have no real existence beyond their

own minds. A life, however full of hope and promise in the beginning that ends in disappointment and failure, will infallibly produce bitterness of spirit unless there are some very strong and active counteracting influences at work. But there is no greater mistake than to affirm either that matrimony is the universal vocation of women, or that a sour temper and a discontented spirit are inseparable from the condition of old maids.

There is no doubt whatever that the more the affections are called out and exercised on worthy objects the more generous and large-hearted people become. Like everything else, good qualities increase and acquire strength by use. It is only when they are, as it were, hoarded that they contract and dwindle. Men who are not accustomed to do kind and generous acts become more and more disinclined to do them. They who are niggards of their love, or who have but few opportunities of exhibiting it, become more and more chary of doing kindnesses, and their faculty of loving diminishes. The married have certainly this advantage over the unmarried, that the sphere of their affections is considerably enlarged by the variety of interests and the greater opportunities which demand the exercise of their affections. A husband and a large family of children develop the sympathies and call out faculties of which the possessors were scarcely conscious till there was some scope for their operations. It is to be remarked that as the poor know how to sympathize with the poor, so they whose power of loving is called most into requisition find that, like the widow's oil and meal, the supply more than keeps pace with the demand. There are also many reasons why we might naturally expect to find old maids less capable of an expenditure of their affections. With fewer opportunities at hand, reverses or disappointment tend to contract the impulses of the heart; and unless they are on their guard, there is great danger of their affections becoming narrowed to the small horizon by which they are circumscribed.

Self, if left to itself, soon absorbs all our faculties, and people who feed on their own hearts grow indifferent to the joys and sorrows of others. Therefore unmarried women are often occupied with their own maladies, their own petty trials; and even their cats, because they belong to themselves, absorb their interests to a degree which becomes absurd, even if it is not absolutely wrong. The spitefulness of an old maid has become quite a proverb, because her own disappointment makes her envious of the success of others, and she is as quick in detecting flaws as she is open-mouthed in proclaiming them. The domestic and daily life of her neighbours supplies her with food for gossip, which is said to be the *specialité* of an old maid. It has been humorously affirmed that the Kilkenny cats are a fitting type of all spinsters of a certain age, and that a contest between them affords as much sport as the greatest lover of mischief can desire. There is, however, one peculiarity about them, which has always struck us as most remarkable. After they have passed the Rubicon of a certain age they consider themselves justified in pronouncing, *ex cathedra* as it were, upon a host of subjects connected with children and their entrance into life with a precision and fulness that would seem to belong only to married women. But so it is—whether they consider that riper years entitle them to dogmatize on subjects of which we, in all charity, hope they have not had any practical experience, it is not for us to say. We only remark upon the fact *en passant*, and express our astonishment that it should be so.

Admitting the justice, in some instances, of the complaint that is made against old maids, and not denying that some amongst them are conspicuous for their *mauvaise langue*, we maintain that they have not the monopoly of it, but that married women have before now acquired a reputation for unequalled skill in backbiting and spitefulness against their fellows. We maintain also that, while admitting the evil tendency of everything that contracts the affections, some of the

pleasantest, most agreeable persons we have known, we have found in the condemned ranks of old maids. We said that it required some strong counteracting influences to neutralize the consequences of a life disappointed of what may be said to be its legitimate aims; but when these influences are in full and unfettered operation, the result is that they produce refinement and an elevation of character which is rarely found elsewhere. The discipline of life tries us all, whatever our condition may be. They who fret and strive and fight against their trials expend their strength uselessly; but they who, on the other hand, accept and make the best of them find a grace and a strength which more than compensate for whatever suffering and weariness accompanies the search after the sweetness which lies at the bottom of even the bitterest cup. The old maid who has accepted her lot without repining—who cultivates her intellect and stores her mind—who enlarges her charity by making the trials of others in some measure her own—who sees that there lies before her a large sphere of usefulness which she can pursue undistracted by domestic and family cares, is a source of blessing to herself and others. Her presence is always hailed because of its healing influence. She can allay dissensions, knowing how to speak the 'soft answer that turneth away wrath.' As in the still moonlight the outer world loses whatever it may have of harshness, and all things are mellowed beneath its rays, so in the presence of one who has learnt lessons of patience, resignation, and unselfishness, the world's irregularities are toned down and softened, and the tumult even of undisciplined hearts is stilled.

It belongs to goodness to make itself felt even to the lowest depths of the human heart; and the presence among us of one who teaches, by the very force of her own excellence, without any desire to teach, has a beneficial influence. She is like the good angel that calmed the troubled waters.

Such instances of spinsterhood are not rare, and happily for us it has

been our good fortune to know some. As we have no reason to suppose that we are privileged beyond others, we may safely infer that our readers will be able to endorse what we do not hesitate to affirm—that some of the most delightful moments of our lives have been spent in the society of old maids, whose well-cultivated minds, powers of appreciation, and abundant charity have secured for them the esteem of all who have had the privilege of their acquaintance. In proportion to their triumphing over difficulties and overcoming preju-

dices, they attain an excellence superior to that of the ordinary run of married women; and as years mellow the feelings and affections, and time softens the asperities of life, they who have themselves well in hand are able to estimate all passing circumstances at their real value; for, after all, the true secret of a happy life lies in the knowledge how to meet events as they occur without being unduly ruffled by any.

'It is the mynd that maketh good or ill;
That maketh wretch or happie, rich or poor.'



WITH A ROSE IN HER HAIR.

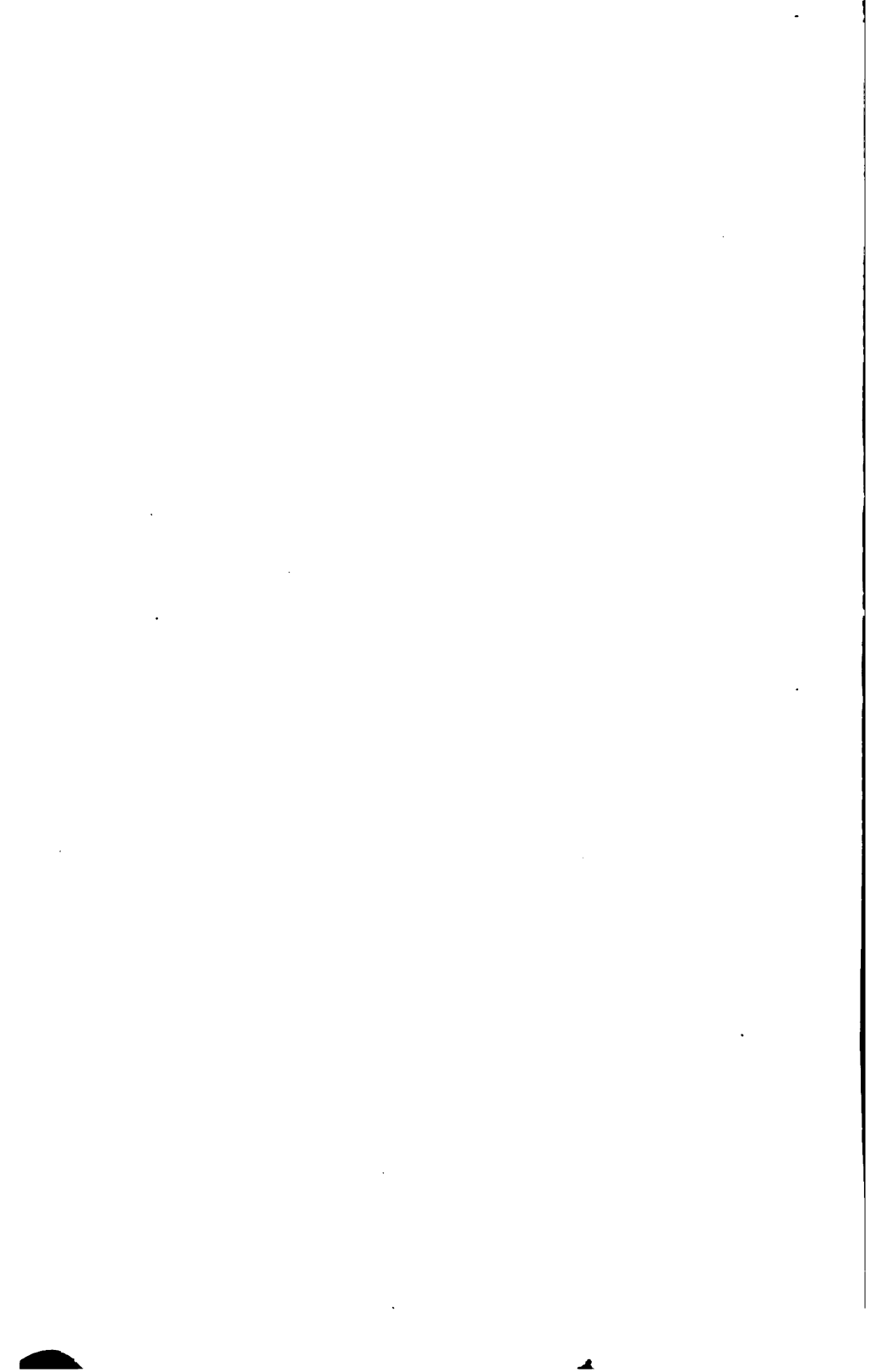
MY own, it is time you were coming,
 For the ball-room is flooded with light,
 And the leader impatiently humming
 The *valse* they begin with to-night !
 But the music, the flowers, and the lustre
 Lack completeness when you are not there,
 So hasten to join Beauty's muster
 With a rose in your hair.

'Twas thus I first saw you, my own one !
 As adown the long terrace you paced,
 You had plucked the white rose—a full-blown one—
 Which amid your dark tresses was placed.
 Then my heart blossomed forth like the flower,
 To see you so young and so fair,
 As you stood in the shade of the tower
 With a rose in your hair.

And for aye, since that moment enchanted,
 My life, both in sun and in storm,
 In sorrow and joy, has been haunted
 By an angel in feminine form.
 Yet I can't—though 'tis constantly nigh me—
 Describe all its loveliness rare ;
 But I know this—it always floats by me
 With a rose in its hair.

And then you remember—(come nearer,
 A word in that ear—like a shell !)—
 When you whispered me none could be dearer
 Than one—but his name I'll not tell.
 Ah ! your hair !—of its flower who bereft it ?
 For you had none, I vow and declare,
 On regaining the Hall ; though you left it
 With a rose in your hair.

But why waste we moments of pleasure ?
 Hark ! the music invites us above :
 Soon our feet shall beat time to the measure,
 As our hearts beat the measure of love.
 Come, queen of the poet's rich fancies—
 My queen, with whom none may compare,
 Come and glide in your grace through the dances
 With a rose in your hair.

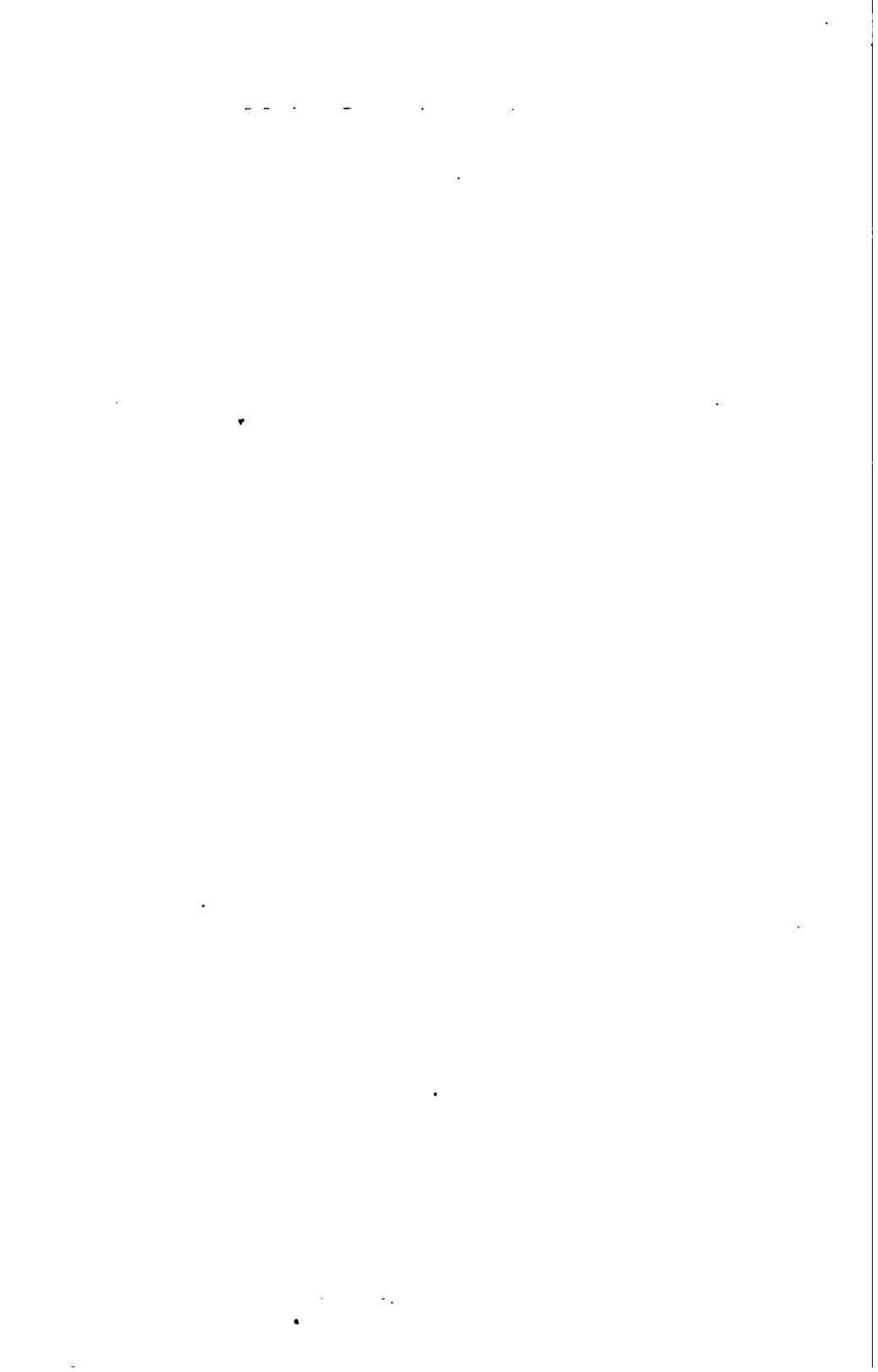




Drawn by R. Newcombe.]

WITH A ROSE IN HER HAIR.

(See the Verses.)



POPPIES IN THE CORN;

OR, GLAD HOURS IN THE GRAVE YEARS.—No. XIV.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE,' &c.

RECREATION GENERALLY.

I HAVE by no means gathered into my handful all or nearly all the possible poppies that dot the sober corn of life. But I remember that I came out only to gather a handful; and not with the intention of stripping the field. And it seems to be about time that the handful was tied up. Here they are, then, the gay flowers: some big and some smaller: some wide-spread and others hardly smoothed out from their crumpling in the green case of the bud: some with a centre of jet, and some with scarce any set off to their gay scarlet; some standing up pert and saucy, and some pulling sideways, with tears of rain upon their bent heads: various, but all of the poppy family, and gathered into one vivid bunch. Ah, may be they were better, scattered here and there among other growth; and a certain sameness in the colour may be wearisome to the eye; besides, who would care to set a handful of poppies in the vase in her room? Poor flowers! they have their appropriate place on the dry summer-bank, and just studding the corn-ranks here and there; but you smile at the innocence that would offer them to you as a nosegay. A bunch of snowdrops, primroses, or violets—this would be well; a bunch of lilies or choicest roses, even better, some might think. But a bunch of flaunting useless poppies:—of course you take them, rather than hurt the kind meaning that gathered them for you;—but, once fairly out of sight of the well-intentioned giver, you do not care to carry them far: you cast them slyly over that hedgerow: there they may lie and wither quickly in the glare, or slowly in the shade. Let who will pick them up. At any rate you think no more of them.

Yet some might care to pick them up, and put them in water, if per-

haps their limp languor may revive into crisp life again. Some, who are out of the way of fields where poppies grow: some, whose lot is cast amid row after row, for miles, of brick or plaster houses, and acres of baking pavement: some, thus circumstanced, might, had they the chance, even pick up your slighted posy, and make much of it, and cherish it as a precious thing.

Even thus, let me be bold to hope, this slight ephemeral record of glad hours that now and then studded the more sedate growth of life, may find a welcome here and there, where glad hours are now scarce and few and far between, and dull days of monotonous work the scarcely broken rule of life. A bunch of poppies, with now and then an ear of corn plucked together with the scarlet flower that grew so close to it that one was unconsciously gathered with the other: a gay posy, with here and there, as a relief, the sober green of a graver thought serving as a useful foil to the blaze and laugh of colour. And if, in this last of the handful, if in this tying up the bunch, I should of choice rather select the quiet tints than the gay,—why, you know that dark evergreen ivy and cool fern-fronds come in well at the last to make a frame out of which the vivid hues may burn.

But in truth I am not now going to seek for any particular specimens of recreative enjoyment. I am rather about to take the whole genus, generally; and converse about that.

There is something to be said about the word itself, Recreation, something suggestive in the consideration of its etymology. For from this we get the best definition of what the thing itself is. And in truth this is a matter not really so well and universally understood as

at first thought it might appear to be. Come, let me ask the reader—How would you explain the word? What would be your definition of *Recreation*? I will show presently why I think that, practically, at least, there are many who would give, or rather, who *do* give, a wrong and incorrect answer to the question, 'What is Recreation?'

We have, I repeat, the meaning of the word given in its very etymology. As *Relaxation* plainly tells of the '*nec semper arcum tendit Apollo*,'—the letting a strung mind free from strain and tension; so *Recreation* is the restoring of that part of our being which is constantly being ground away by the ceaseless wear and tear of life. Strength and energy, tone and spirit,—these are renewed and restored to us by a healthful and enjoyable change of employment. We are then, in a measure, *recreated*; we start fresh in the business of life, with a replenished balance at our bankers'.

A healthful and enjoyable change of employment: thus I would define recreation. And therefore I can hardly include sleep in my definition. And yet how we are indeed *recreated* in sleep!

'The innocent sleep;

Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life; sore labour's bath;
Balm of hurt minds; great Nature's second
course;

Chief nourisher in life's feast.'

And another poet calls it, as probably we all know,

'Tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep.'

Indeed which of us but will endorse the opinion as to the delightfulness, after a day of weary brain and body work, of nestling down into the inviting bed, and closing the 'tired eyelids upon tired eyes,' waiting then, just a brief conscious while, for that refreshing balm to settle upon them. For thorough enjoyment of this, you must have retired in good time at night, and be able thus to look forward to a tract of fair broad hours of sleep. You miss the satisfaction of the feeling, however you are still more appreciative of the delightfulness

of bed, if you have crawled into it at two or three in the morning, after your task of writing (necessary to be sent off on the morrow) is wearily completed. For you feel that you have, until seven o'clock, only a meagre four hours' space for indulgence of fatigue which eight would scarcely rectify. So you are like the man who comes in from a walk furiously hungry, and has perforce to content him with one very small mutton-chop. He keenly appreciates it, no doubt; but he knows, at the outset, that it will but whet his appetite for more. But, with a long night before you, you cuddle under the clothes, and hug the conscious delight of feeling unconsciousness gathering over you:—

'Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is
For gift or grace surpassing this—
"He giveth His beloved sleep;"'

Nevertheless this restoring power will not fall in with my present idea of *recreation*. Still, while we were considering the etymology of the word, we could hardly altogether exclude this process of winding us up when we totter, and casting us, fresh and steady, spinning back into Life's ring on the morrow.

You see, I describe Recreation as being a healthful and enjoyable change of employment. For *idleness* is not recreation. 'All work and no play,' it is pretty generally held, at least in theory, result in anything but the brightness of the intellect submitted to the process. But here, and elsewhere, the thing is, to find the mean between extremes. For *all play and no work* lead neither to usefulness nor to happiness in the experience of those who try this recipe, wearied with the other. Far more wearisome than hard work does the utter absence of work soon become. Look at the languid, bored, boneless state into which some of the Dundreary class are brought by the disastrous condition of not being *compelled* to do that honest manly work which they have not stamina enough in them to do of free choice, and without compul-

sion. Oh! the talk of 'killing time,' and of 'not knowing what to do'—what would not some men, with the purpose of manhood in them, give for a few of those hours frittered, not set out to interest, hours of contemptible fretting inaction, that *might* have been devoted to happy, manly work! Tell not me that manhood is *latent* in these simpering pseudo-idiot; and that occasion can call out a spark from which, foresooth, they shall, with an air deprecatory of having once been betrayed into manliness, sink back into their smouldering life of unreality, artificiality, affectation again;—tell me not *this* as a palliative. That they *have* good stuff in them, and take a pride and pleasure in graduating in the school of insipidity and unreality, is, to my mind, more to their condemnation than to their praise. 'I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong;—thus spoke a brave, loving man's heart some centuries ago. Ah! if *that* were the ground of his writing, he might have been spared the labour of an epistle now.

Honest and thorough work: you cannot change your employment pleausurably if you have no employment at all: you cannot recreate mind and body if neither have wear and tear; or if the very so called *recreation* is the chief wear and tear they have. And that this is so, sometimes, will be presently shown. I like to see a MAN earnest in whatever he is about. I like to see him go about his work in a *thorough* way: and I like to see him really eager, sincere, about his play. Not masking the honest interest which he ought to feel in anything that is worth the doing: not going about with a languid simpering pretence of being dragged into an exertion, whereas he would rather be loling and lounging about, a carefully-rendered and near imitation of the idiot—this being, it would appear, indeed, the ideal of his imitation. Excited, alert, I would have him; rather too much in earnest about the employment of the moment than not enough in earnest about it; flushed cheeks, hair tossed off the brow, as he eagerly argues about (even such

a trifle as) this stroke in croquet, or this ephemeral question of the day. I would rather he kept his temper, on every ground. I think no game can possibly be worth the loss of good humour. But, of the two, I own to a preference for honest excess of vehemence, over what, at least at first, is an *insincere* and *assumed* over-apaty. I hate the folly of a man who has carefully boned himself into a limp, inane, characterless neither-man-nor-woman. The lisp, the stare, the eye-glass, the drawl:—Oh, to do him the kindness of taking him by the coat-collar and shaking him into reality, into naturalness, for but one brief half-hour!

If you are in an idiot asylum you know what to expect. But, in society, to see young fellows with *capacities* of energy and strength taking absolute pains to appear as though born fools: this is, I own, aggravating to me to the last degree. I wish some one of those of whom I am thinking may happen upon this page, and set himself to use for one half-hour the faculties he is surrendering, and ask himself whether he thinks he is making life, this brief, probationary life, that noble thing which his inmost heart must be aware it is, or might become. And let him cast about for *some* honest employment in which a man may heartily put out the powers with which God has nobly endowed him. Oh, there is work to be done, in this world, for us all, if we will look for it, or even wait for it, with an honest view towards it. It is a noble sight to see a young fellow putting out the strength which God has given him, towards some worthy end. It is a pitiable sight to see him using his energies in the effort to become unenergetic, using his wit in the endeavour to appear a fool, using his strength in emulating helplessness and weakness.

You must, therefore, if you would know the meaning of recreation, know also the meaning of *work*. You must earn before you spend. Recreation must not be the business, but the leisure of life. It must be the poppy merely amid the corn. We cannot have recreation without some exhaustion. We must have

lost something by friction, before we can require to be recreated at all.

So we quite dismiss the absence of earnest employment from our idea of Recreation. Doing nothing is the hardest of hard work: and under such a regimen the muscles and the brain become flaccid and flabby, the temper touchy and irritable, and the whole man altogether unhunged. It is said that, to insure his goods against future depredations, a pastry-cook will sometimes give unlimited license to the boy whom he has taken into his shop: a day or two will sicken him. So with an active-minded man doomed or privileged to be idle. After being left for a whole year with nothing to do, I fancy he would find recreation in a good turn on the treadmill.

Often has it been noticed, in books and in real life too, how natural a mistake, but also how great mistake is that of the busy man, who through a life of close over-work, looks forward to the time when he may give up business, and retire upon a period of unlimited leisure. But I have touched on this before. It is unnecessary to repeat again how complete is his mistake, and how, unwillingly it may be, and by compelled degrees, he discovers that it is too late for him to form new tastes, to seek new employment. That *doing nothing* is, to the energetic mind, no rest at all, far less recreation; and that that to which he had looked forward all his life as the goal towards which his work tended, was, in reality, far more wearying than even those years of incessant over-work had been.

But graver mistakes than that just noticed are committed through the not rightly understanding this truth: that not *absence of occupation*, but congenial, continual, enjoyed occupation, is that which is our real recreation after toil. And so, in the secret hearts of many who have been imperfectly or mistakenly instructed,—or not instructed at all, maybe,—an acknowledged distaste is latent with regard to the prospect of that truest deepest recreation; that *recreation* in the fullest and most profound sense of the word

which lies (for those who labour faithfully) at the end of this life which tires us all out so. An endless inactivity; this is more or less the idea; all men's varied energies and powers of thought, and myriad branchings of action, merged in the ceaseless and unbroken singing of hymns! Really this idea, more or less hazy, is one lurking, I believe, scarce detected or sifted, in the minds of many people. Can we wonder that the idea of Heaven, thus represented, becomes a dreary, an uninviting thought, to the eager mind of the young, full as this is of life, activity, and work? But a little thought would detect the mistake. Our actions shall praise our Maker, not our voices only, all our other powers being left to stagnate. It is true that Eternity shall be the singing of His praises; but the song shall come, not from our lips only, but from our lives. So the brook sings as it rushes forth to water the valley, but is silent if it lies stagnant in the pool. So the stars praise Him in their ordered courses; so day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge; and though there is neither speech nor language, yet their voice is universally heard.

Well, as I said just now must sometimes be the case, I could not help picking this ear of corn; it grew so close to a poppy.

Properly to understand the true object of recreation would greatly assist in guiding us to a wise selection in our search for it. You can make a blaze, no doubt, by putting the end of a candle, or a drench of paraffin on the sinking fire. But what it really wanted was *fresh fuel*. The enlivening process to which you resorted was an illusory one. The sudden blaze soon dies down, and behold! the fire has sunk lower than before.

Now I would show by this illustration, that many of the amusements of Society are not *recreation*. They are, in short, the serious work of life with many. The round of balls, parties, theatres: the gay 'life of Society,'—there may be at first an excitement about it which makes

the life delightful. Just as it is with the drunkard, at first there are in his pursuit fascinations which lead him on. But it is with him as with the life of frivolity; even when the enjoyment has died out, there is a necessity to go on. And just as he did not, in the first instance, drink with the view merely of being refreshed, recruited, so it is in what I call the dram-drinking of Society. Not recreation, but excitement, was the thing sought: it was not thirst, but craving, which had to be appeased.

What wonder, then, that before long the very amusements rather tire than refresh? What wonder that, cup after cup cloying the sated palate, the stimulating power must be heightened with hot spice of vicious pleasure, until even this also becomes tame, and that weary, bored condition is reached, that premature old age, with neither its honour nor its toil, which we may perceive in young hearts and young faces that have thus had perpetual stimulant in the place of daily bread? What wonder that to us, in our quieter life, whose anxieties even are healthful, whose work is steady and play, if rare, yet even therefore the more intensely enjoyed,—what wonder that to us, outside the circle of that earnest and wearying frivolity, there should ooze out, from time to time, dark hints of a withering blight gaining ground among the fair new flowers that are brought up in that unnatural and forced heat? Whispers of an ever-growing laxity of morals; of innuendo permitted or not suppressed by even fair listeners; of evil taken for granted and treated as a thing allowed by tacit consent, and that has become matter of course? If the life of idleness tires, the life busy only in frivolities becomes such a weight upon the hands as to be ere long, almost an intolerable burden.

Many of the amusements of Society, then, are not Recreation, but most fatiguing, distressing toil. For you must note that the languor, the lassitude, the ennui, the weary-o'-the-world look and language which is not unfamiliar to those who mix, even occasionally, in fashionable life,

are not the result of excess of work, but of excess of (if we must call it so) *play*.

And besides that such a life, as a whole, is of all the most wearisome, we have further to consider more particularly the intensely *fatiguing* nature of many of the employments (for recreations we may not miscall them) of the gay world. Once and away to dip somewhat deep into the night hours at some merry evening party; this might do little more harm than to set the brain spinning beyond the control of much quiet recollected thought before the wearied limbs and excited mind sought the welcome bed. Add to this the chance of somewhat later hours in the morning; and then let us say that, for the mere now and then of life, the censor might seem over grave who should too uncompromisingly censure the venial exception to what would be blameable as a rule.

But continue this night after night, —theatre, ball, party,—making i the rule, not the exception, and only consider the severe toil of it: the wear and tear to body, soul, and spirit. Nay, look experimentally at the results of the life to which I have alluded; and consider whether fatigue and languor of body, intense depression of spirits, and a very searing of soul, are not the at least frequent results of it?

Recreation, then, must be had, but it is not the chief object of life: if made so, it ceases, from the necessities of the case, to be *recreation*. The object of it, the very condition of its being, is that it should follow work and precede work. Hear the wise Poet-Divine: 'Let not your recreations be lavish spenders of your time; but choose such which are healthful, short, transient, recreative, and apt to refresh you: but at no hand dwell upon them, or make them your great employment: for he that spends all his time in sports, and calls it recreation, is like him whose garment is all made of fringes and his meat nothing but sauces; they are healthless, chargeable, and useless.' 'It is lawful to relax and unbend our bow, but not to suffer it to be unready or unstrung.'

I remember feeling much inclined to moralize over a Butterfly dying in my Church in the winter time. Nay, you will remind me *that* simile is surely worn out long ago. There have been too many morals drawn from butterflies, bees, and ants, to render any further such use of them endurable. Say you so? Nevertheless I will e'en have my say about the simple, common incident. I shall probably, you know, say it in something of different words from those of my predecessors.

I was, then, passing, I think, from the reading-desk to the pulpit; and, as I ascended the stone stairs, I was caught by what struck me just then as a somewhat pathetic sight. A once rich-hued, vivid-barred Atalanta butterfly, feebly fluttering to crawl up the dim panes, and falling back helplessly to die on the dusty ledge of the window. The rich or glowing colours, so dingy and faded now, the velvet pile so threadbare, the creature whose life is so connected with summer days, fallen into the gripe of winter; the thing most suggestive of gaiety and careless enjoyment, now so pathetic a wreck of its summer self. Once it had wandered, a very Ginevra, away from its flowers and delights and ultramarine days, and burning noons and mellow nights, within the prison (to it) of these cold stone walls. Unhappily safe from casualties of birds or storms, and sheltered, I suppose, in a measure, from extreme frosts, and so having contrived to linger out a miserable existence after the summer days, in which alone it was at home, had gone.

One might have moralized in many ways concerning this incident. It might have been a splendid beauty, grown, in a moody hour, awary of the world; slipping, in her mood, out of the golden mellow day, into some cold and 'narrowing nunnery walls,' and, being in truth without the heart for this, thereafter finding her mistake, and pining desolately away,—fluttering, as it were, instinctively towards the warm light, but overweak to profit by the relenting gleam, and so just sinking back to die.

But the turn the incident took with me was the more commonplace one. I felt inclined to lay by my prepared discourse, and to deal in the obvious suggestions connected with the episode. For indeed, life is made up of commonplaces; of events new enough, it is true, to those first struck by the shaft of agony, or the sunbeam of joy, but all a matter-of-course to those who are the unimpassioned lookers-on—until their own turn comes.

Butterfly hours,—these, it seemed to me, were well. But not the butterfly life. And I remembered another incident connected with a dead butterfly. It was in a famous picture in the Royal Academy of one year, I think, of the Eighteen-fifties, a picture, ghastly enough, but stamping itself on the memory, a picture (it was Egg's, I think) in two panels, a picture representing the gay and glorious life, and the dismal and wretched death, of the princely Buckingham. There he lay, stretched out on the low pallet, ghastly in death, merely desolate and utterly deserted!

'In the worst Inn's worst room.'

It mattered little that this line, that the picture itself, was not wholly accordant with facts. If this were not altogether so with Buckingham, yet such an end to such a beginning and continuance is not one unknown nor uncommon in the history of the world. Gay butterflies that flaunted in the summer get caught in the grip of the winter days:—But I forgot. I omitted that very detail of the picture which is most allied with my subject.

Just like that forlorn insect which I had seen in church, there was, allegorically intended, lying on the plebeian window-ledge,—a once gay butterfly. Threadbare in garb; dull in hue; the very counterpart of the gay idler that lay there, after all his trifling, brought face to face at last with a serious matter, even with Death.

There was more than a sermon in that commonplace introduction of the dead butterfly.

It seems so especially sad to see so more than blank an end of a life

that so loved the sunshine and the beauty and the warmth, so formed to bask in the open flowers, and to luxuriate on the south walls bossed with mellowing apricots and swelling peaches. God gave him that joyous heart: and foolish man would wish for him nothing better than that he might unrestrainedly indulge its summer-tastes. But did not very early a grave voice warn him that that joyousness was given to be husbanded, not spent? That here self-denial, discipline, training, was the condition of life, which here, for wise purposes, to be fully revealed one day, was appointed to be cramped, cabined, confined from its instincts of unrestraint and free following of its fancy? It was to be 'only waiting.' But he would not wait. He would not now pinch a bit to live on the interest merely. He would spend the principal recklessly, lavishly. And soon it is all gone. Then instead of the profusion to which sufficiency would have increased, there is no provision to satisfy that yearning for happiness which indeed was God-implanted in the beings who were created for happiness; only a start aside on their part diverted and delayed the plan. Then, even now and here, begins the craving of that fearful famine whose yearnings shall last throughout Eternity.

And so much for mere butterflies.

We, the mentors, we, the parents, must beware of drawing the reins too tight, and so placing unnecessary stumbling-blocks in the way of our natural or spiritual children. We have much to answer for, if we do; and, truly, we have need, sore need, in this matter, of all the wisdom, of all the guidance, that we can obtain. For we have, in our severity of training, both with ourselves and in the case of others, to guard against the almost certain recoil, against a probable if not an inevitable reaction.

More especially, perhaps, since reaction is the atmosphere in which we live now-a-days. Children have reacted from a servile respect and an unnatural awe, into a more than due familiarity; and from the deferential use of the holy names,

'Father,' 'Mother,' have passed into the use of slang names which I shall merely stigmatize as being in the lowest degree of bad taste, ill-breeding, and debased intellect. Statesmen have reacted from routine to revolution. Churchmen have reacted from utter baldness and deadness to the tendency towards floridity and fever. Girls have reacted from huge pelisses and poke bonnets to what I shall briefly call 'Mountebank costume.' Tories have reacted to Radicals under the thin skin of Conservatism. Medicine has reacted from excessive bleeding and drugging to the quackery of Homeopathy. And the old, indiscriminate horror at the very name of *novel*, were it innocent or baneful, has reacted to the toleration or patronizing of volumes as full of poison as are a cobra's fangs.

A kind though a firm hand, and while you will not be weakly indulgent, or traitorously lax, yet, having trained your young people to some honest labour, and put them in the way of real, thorough work, do not grudge for them, nay, rather provide for them recruiting rests on the journey, recreative refreshment by the way. Teach them ever, by the nobility of work, the sweetness of recreation.

But I want, while I am about it, to suggest a simple rule which might with advantage guide and direct us in our recreation.

Life is a grave thing, and yet, in society, it seems almost a crime (at least a mistake, which in society is held to be a far worse thing than crime) to treat it or even allude to it as such. I remember being much struck with the truth and a certain sad beauty, in a review which touched upon this thought of Frederick Locker's poetry. It described it, together with Præd's and Thackeray's, as 'masked poetry.' 'The true feeling of the poet is masked with laughter.' The poetry of men who belong to society, and who, nevertheless, amid all its froth, feel that 'there are depths in our nature which even in the gaiety of drawing-rooms cannot be forgotten. Theirs is the poetry of bitter-

sweet—of sentiment that breaks into humour, and of solemn thought that, lest it should be too solemn, plunges into laughter.' And this is, the reviewer says, in an especial sense the character of the verse of society. 'When society ceases to be simple it becomes sceptical.' And this tone is assumed 'in self-defence, and becomes a necessity of rapid conversation.' When society is refined, that is, when the intercourse of its constituent parts has become a thing of sickly, at least of exotic, growth; not the healthy clustering of daisies in the meadows, or of primroses in the copse, but the unnatural culture of the hothouse;—when society has thus been educated into artificiality, and the *real* eliminated from its life; squeamishness substituted for modesty, non-chalance for feeling, languor for honest impulse, pulp for bones;—when thus society is refined, 'it begins to dread the exhibition of strong feeling, no matter whether real or simulated. If real, it disturbs the level of conversation and of manners; if simulated, so much the worse. In such an atmosphere emotion takes refuge in jest, and passion hides itself in scepticism of passion. We are not going to wear our hearts upon our sleeves; rather than that, we shall pretend to have no heart at all; and if perchance a bit of it should peep out, we shall hide it again as quickly as possible, and laugh at the exposure as a good joke. If a lady in a ball-room finds that her back-hair has escaped from the ligaments with which it is held together, the best she can do is to laugh; we may laugh at ourselves also, when we give way to feeling, and pass it off as a momentary weakness.'

Now there is, as I said, beauty and truth in this description; though beauty of the autumnal class, and truth which brings tears near to the eyes. To live and mix with one's fellow-men and women, and feel that our life is bound to be a sort of tacit masquerade; that the very last character in which we dare appear is that which is truthfully our own; that, whatever depths lie deep down below the

surface, it is the beaded, frothy surface alone which is ever to be seen by the companions of our unbusiness hours. All this, I say, is sad:—this need to laugh with the lips, while all the time a low moan lurks muffled in the heart; to have to talk gaily while

'All within is cheerless, dark, and cold,
When all earth's joys seem mockery and madness
And life more tedious than a tale twice told,'

—this knowing that, if he become (as who must not, sooner or later?) that

'Poor sequestered stag,
That from the hunter's aim hath ta'en a hurt,'

and so is now fain to languish instead of moving with gay springy step,—that then he must drop out of the care and thought of the company that would take no denial from him, a little agone, but now,

'A careless herd,
Full of the pasture, jump along by him,
And never stay to greet him.'

'Tis just the fashion,' no doubt. But it is a cruelly sad one. Only even amid this state of things, in which reality is contrary to good taste, and emotion intolerable, and seriousness forbidden, yet now and then (if but as a change of sensation,) a sentence or two is permissible, if it come from an outsider, an intruder into the group, whose intrusion is guarded from any excess of prolixity. So that I may venture upon one earnest word, being a brief word, upon this theme of the maxim which should govern the choice of our recreation.

Every one, then, should be careful that his recreation be, in the first place, perfectly innocent, and bringing harm, direct or indirect, to none; next that it be not mere trifling and childish folly (done, that is, *for the sake of* trifling and in an idle spirit—I do not here speak of a light act with a healthy end). For there will be bubbles on the deep stream, but we do not grudge occasional gaiety to permanent depth. There must be the depth, however, to justify the lightness. Not mere idleness of life, then, but a service of God, if not in itself, yet by fitting us for our direct

service. This, rightly regarded, is not to sadden, but to ennoble life. Is it not a glorious thing that not only our work, but our recreation, may, for its ultimate goal, propose to itself so great an end? Therefore should there be a fitness and a dignity even in the unbending of our lighter hours; and wise Jeremy's advice to the scholar is one that all may lay to heart for its beauty and wisdom:

'Spend not your time in that which profits not; for your labour and your health, your time and your studies are very valuable; and it is a thousand pities to see a diligent and a hopeful person spend himself in gathering cockle-shells and little pebbles, in telling sands upon the shores, and making garlands of useless daisies.'

But now I shall not call the work of the scientific collector a trifling amusement, if it be a recreation from graver work. Why, I might have devoted a whole poppy-paper to a day of hunting after, say, beetles, butterflies, rare plants or ferns. What more delightful, to the adept in such things, than the starting forth, armed with net, and many boxes, or with portentous tin case,—an exaggerated sandwich-box—for a day's hunting after new specimens? There is for one thing the enjoyableness which belongs alike to all poppy-days—that of the free rush out into a wider air of liberty, after the confinement of close work; also of the change of employment, routine, scenery. There is, for another, the real relish and keen appetite which comes from the fact of being a collector, a relish common to all collectors—of securing specimens which you possessed not before, pinning hereafter neatly set-out coleoptera, or lepidoptera, into some place long tantalizingly vacant;—labelling the splashed or speckled or blue or snowy eggs, and gumming them on to their card;—placing the pink-lined prickly shell into its bed of white wool;—sticking the postage-stamp into the album and just filling the gap in the page;—fastening in the large-leaved portfolio the '*Clora perfoliata*,' or

the '*Hymenophyllum Tunbridgense*,' or the '*Osmunda regalis*,'—storing by any specimen which has been really self-found, and henceforth is fragrant with delightful associations of the when and the where and the how.

Then there are so many concomitant delights: blowing air; fresh sky; banks of flowers—blue-bell, and small scabious, and yellow toad flax, and ox-eye daisies, and speckled grasses of all silky feather; why the scramble up the cliffs, sloping and swarded, between Dover and Sandgate would be of itself delightful, quite independently of the fact that in them you find, laid out for your enjoying, a wide—what shall I call it?—'entomological garden.' And the blue sea faints and dies, with calming murmur, on the yellow sands below; and the sparkles glint over it as it brims, grey and bazy, up to the horizon; and the flowers scent the warm air, and the bees penetrate the flowers, and the butterflies flaunt by, all the while you are burrowing or scratching under the roots, and about the stones, after some poor-bug—the unlearned contemptuously call it—but, to you, rare and nearly unique 'specimen.'

But I have never myself joined in this chase: my craving was, once upon a time, for even every kind of British fern; nor did I value these unless myself had found my specimen. So my hungry eye would perpetually rake the hedgerows and banks in my walks; this, the sole disadvantage, for the mind and the eye are taken away from the wider prospect. Most enjoyable the voyage of search, on being assured that such and such a coy absentee *was* certainly to be found (by those that could) in such or such a habitat. The anticipation all the way; the eagerness as the place is neared; the sifting and patient search; the child-bound of delight when success rewarded it! Tracing backwards and forwards the spongy marsh after '*Botrychium lunaria*:' calculating how to bridge that deep wide ditch upon the other side of which waved profuse masses of oak or beech fern,

and succeeding at last by sinking big stones until an insecure footing, delightful in its peril, was obtained;—then a sufficiency of fronds for drying, or (better) roots for planting, having been secured, the triumphant arrival at home, and the sympathising assemblage of heads, like minnows about a caddis-worm: all this was exhilarating; truly recreation.

Nay, even in the mild balmy summer nights, see me faring forth with an eager lepidopterist, towards Brighton Downs; stopping on the way at a chemist's to buy a nest of cunning wooden boxes, fitting one within the other. A long uphill walk, stimulated by curiosity on my part, and by the appetite of the collector on his; and the scene of operations is reached. I am to learn, tyro as I am, something as to the process and excitement of 'sugaring.' Accordingly a halt is made at the first post, on (I believe) the racing-course; and this is well smeared with sugar, rum, treacle, and beer—or some such compound. So the next, and the next, on to some twenty or more. The darkness deepens; and now after a breathless pause, we revisit the first of our snares—the dark-lantern is turned full upon the sticky preparation: only a common moth or two fluttering about it, or gloating on it. We leave the filmy, gauzy things unmolested, and pass on to the next. A doubtful case here: still—if passed by his feelings might be hurt—well, a box is popped on him and he is transferred to his bed of pounded laurel-leaves and chloroform. The next: and then the next:—and here is a grand find! The excitement, if subdued, is intense; until he is secured, and safely housed. Then a blank time succeeds, and the sport flags; here is a fair catch or two presently; again, perhaps, a grand prize. I could not help whimsically conjecturing the suspicious bearing of some vigilant policeman, unversed in the magic of lepidopterism, if, attracted by our will-o'-the-wisp lantern, he should suddenly demand our occupation. Also I fancied the scrutiny and speculations of the uninitiated

if they should be, moth-like, attracted by our sugared posts next day. The fair primrose glove innocently applied, the injured remark, 'Why, it's sticky!' as the result of the experiment:—fancy depicted it all.

But the moths became coy, and the collector appeased, and, with a fair bag, or box, we descended the heights to sarcasm and supper.

Well, perhaps I have set down these ending trifles to show that I did not mean to intimate that our recreations should be, in their subject-matter, ponderous. If the life be earnest, womanly or manly, why we can allow easily-stirred ripples to the top of the meadow that has a good deep bottom of grass; and froth to the full purpose-moved waters; and ('tis for the last time that I shall weary you with the simile) *poppies in the corn*.

There is exceeding beauty in that joyous life under which earnestness lies, but which retains the child-power of quick delight and ready enjoyment: that life, of which most can recall some instances, which

• Has a grace in being gay, which even mournful souls approve;

For the root of some grave earnest thought is understruck so rightly

! As to justify the foliage and the waving flowers above.'

But I should end. I will for a moment dwell upon one point which I did but mention, in my maxim for directing our choice of recreation; viz., *That it be perfectly innocent, and bringing harm, direct or indirect, to none*. I might (but I will not) bring in here certain reasons why, long time before I was ordained, I gave up, once and for ever, after a little searching thought, all visits to theatres. To an opera I have never been. I might (but I refrain) bring forward certain weighty suggestions concerning card-playing and going to races. Some of my readers may like to exercise their wits in puzzling out what might be these thoughts which are not here set down. Be it enough for me to quote a, with me, very favourite couplet from Wordsworth, as to the rule which

he ever kept in view in the lighter hours of life. It was as follows:—

‘Never to blend my pleasure or my sport
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.’

Most people can so far put two and two together as to make out my meaning, and couple my allusions, in inserting these lines in this paper. What a different thing society, what a different place the world, would be, if we established this for our rule, in cases of doubtful amusements (and there are many). Never to blend our pleasure or our recreation with sin or temptation of others. What said a kind wise heart, many years ago, concerning even a perfectly harmless matter, and one in which he had a perfect right to indulge? ‘It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby

thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak.’ And again: ‘If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.’

It is good to be merry and wise:—it is good, also, to be honest and true:—and the two need not be dissociated. But here I end. My poppies being now gathered, *may* (which I deprecate) bring (it is a poppy-virtue) recreative sleep to some. To other some, kindlier-hearted, and not needing great things to give them pleasure, they may be a welcome suggestion of glad hours to come, glad hours also past, in the long ranks of the sad years: gay poppies pleasant to behold, laughing here and there about the useful corn.



IMPRESSIONS OF ONE TERM AT EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

BY AN EXPELLED UNDERGRADUATE.

'OH mihi præteritos referat nunc Jupiter annos!' howls the poet. But supposing that the jovial but viciously-disposed old cloud-compeller alluded to possessed both the power and the will to entertain for us mortals such a suggestion, is there any reasonable probability that we should live these *præteritos annos* over again with any more credit, or even with any less discredit to ourselves than is now the case? Would the pages of our past history be less blurred by the stains of puerile follies, less disgraced by the shameful blots of adult vices than we find them now to be?—now that maturer years have brought with them a ripper judgment, and calm retrospect brings its bitter heartache of remorse for golden opportunities irrevocably cast away; now that the teeth which in all the hot-headed fire of early youth and new-found freedom from restraint buried themselves so eagerly in the tempting ripe fruit have been brought up sharp with a click and a thrill of anguish against the inevitable stone concealed therein; in short, now that we have arrived at a common stand-point with the sapient son of Bathsheba, who having not conquered his passions, but drunk the cup of sensual indulgence to the very dregs, and gorged the cravings of youthful passion by excess, deliberately turns round upon the world which he has sucked dry, and assures mankind that everything sublunary is superlative vanity!

No, I do not for a moment believe that Solomon, for all the trite sayings of Ecclesiastes, would have in any material way altered his mode of life if he had had the chance to live it over again; neither do I believe that any of us would do so, unless, indeed, the King of gods and men would permit us to attach one condition to the bargain, and suffer us to recommence our race of life not only with all the same advantages of unsullied reputations,

undimmed energies, unblunted aspirations after good, but also *plus* the EXPERIENCE we now have: then there might be a chance of better things in a time of literal regeneration; but as matters now stand, the sentiment of the poet is but the merest, uttermost claptrap. Well, but still, in common with Solomon, we may endeavour to make some use of this dearly-bought experience of our past lives to warn others over whom we may at any time gain any influence—we may assure them of our conviction, arrived at from personal experience, of the utter worthlessness of sensual enjoyment—of the hollowness of a life of pleasure—of the bitter disappointment and sickening satiety of those who give themselves up to it, but I am convinced with little chance of doing real good; for is it not notorious that men of dash and spirit will not be persuaded of the truth of anything upon the experience of others, but scattering our Ecclesiastes to the winds, will insist upon essaying it for themselves?

Thus did I moralize, *multa mœcunc volutans*, as I was spinning down the country in the 10.25 express from Didcot to the west, meditatively chewing the bitter cud of reflection and the end of one of Hedderly's choicest Havannahs. It was foreign to my nature thus to occupy myself in the train. I have often heard it said, 'Tell me who are a man's companions, and I will tell you what sort of fellow he is himself.' But I say, Tell me what a man does in an express train, and I will tell you what his tastes are! One man farms with all his might, drains fields, cuts down hedgerow timber, brings large waste tracts under cultivation by the steam-plough; another builds churches and schools, and preaches the Gospel to gaping yokels in the fields; another breeds cattle or horses; but most, I fancy, go across country. To a true fox-hunter there is something exhilarating in 'spotting' a

country from an express train; it is so delightfully easy to 'choose your place' and 'nick across' from the elevation of the embankment. But I was not in my normal state. I was going home from Oxford under a cloud, for a long, a very long vacation. In my pocket reposed (pardon me, ye bishops!) a 'letter dismissory' from the rector of my college to my father, containing a copy of the resolution arrived at that very morning by the secret and awful 'Star Chamber,' known to Exonians as the 'Common Room.' They had decided, with some spleen, but with unmistakable justice and wisdom, that from what they could discover of my disposition I was far more likely to set their ancient college practically on fire than metaphorically to ignite Father Thames with the flame of my intellectual brilliancy; in short, as I should neither do credit to them nor to the University, they had been compelled to remove my name from the books of the college, &c. &c. Thus had I terminated a university career of singular brevity, but not without the saccharine accompaniment supposed to belong by rights to all things remarkable for shortness, from a donkey's canter to a *nez retourné*; and now, as I whirled through the air in that express train, with the memory of the gloomy visages of outraged Dons fresh in my mind, and the anticipation of immediately becoming confronted with the angry visage of an outraged governor, a rush of recollections chased one another through my brain, and like the shadows of huge clouds hurrying over a landscape, the prominent events of my first and last term at Oxford passed in review before me.

Exeter College, Oxford! Oh, how proudly had I ordered that honoured address to be engraved upon my cards but a few short months ago! As a chip from an old Devon block, the excellent institution of Walter de Stapledon the Good had naturally been selected to do duty as my intellectual nurse, and take the charge of me for my *alma mater*. I need not shrink from transcribing the name of this college in full, for I am

convinced that it would be impossible to hit upon an institution which is more perfect in all its departments than this one; it is good, in short, 'all round and down to the ground;' and the very decided and speedy *congé* which I myself received is but a proof of the watchfulness of its authorities over the conduct of those committed to their care. I would speak with respect of Walter de Stapledon, of Edmund Strafford, of Sir William Petre; I would speak and think with more than respect, nay, with a positively affectionate, tender gratitude, of the excellent Mrs. Shiers, who shuffled off this mortal coil in the year 1770, and thoughtfully provided in her last will and testament for the creature comforts of the undergraduates of Exeter College. There is, I am certain, no benefactor's name more frequently to be heard upon the lips of grateful students than hers. The most touching allusions to the 'fundamental' principles of her charity are usually to be heard between breakfast and the commencement of each day's work! I speak with respect and gratitude of the whole existing fraternity within those hallowed precincts—from the venerable chief, with his genial and insinuating manners, forcing upon each individual undergraduate the conviction that he alone had excited a warm interest in that paternal heart, down to the estimable but somewhat slippery mortal who acted Cerberus at the college gates, and who possessed as many pockets, gaping for half-sovereigns, as that king of curs rejoiced in mouths. What if the perquisites of this latter janitorial individual were enormous? what if the frequent contact between gold and the palm of his hand had produced in him the symptom '*crescit amor nummi quantum ipsa pecunia crescit*?' he is but following out his line of life. Yes, I would speak with respect of them all; they all did their duty according to their lights, though, in some instances, these lights were by no means burning, shining luminaries; but to me they are now as mysterious beings of some pre-existing sphere, as those who once consti-

tuted my world and wielded an omnipotent influence over my destinies, but whom I have now left far, far behind, for am I not an expelled undergraduate? And now, as I reflect between the puffs of my cigar—the fragrance of Havannah soothes my brain, and stimulates and brightens up my introspective power—I ask myself point blank, but why am I an expelled undergraduate? Why am I, with every earthly prospect blighted, turning my unwilling back upon the University? What is the rock upon which the frail vessel of my life has stranded and become a total wreck? It is not upon a strange and unexpected reef—it is not upon a hitherto undiscovered coral island. No; like the ‘Carnatic’ steaming full speed upon her doom in a well-known chart-marked highway of the sea, so have I, with my eyes open and yet blind, crushed my feeble timbers, as ten thousand better men have done before me, upon the coral reef of ‘Pleasure;’ and because the danger-flag was disregarded, my ribs must bleach and whiten, with other wasted lives, upon those desert sands. Oh, ye rationalists! who tremble not to bring the maxims of political economy to bear upon the secret hidden councils of the Almighty, and to whom the existence of a little waste disproves the hand of Providence as guiding earthly issues;—what will ye say to waste so terrible as this—the waste of young, fresh lives; the blighting of so many buds so full of promise; the utter waste of all the anguish, love and tenderness of a mother; the striving prayers and self-denial of a father? all are frustrated, wasted! And why? Because the natural appetites, the animal cravings and desires implanted in man by the God of nature, have been yielded to just one hair’s breadth beyond the standard of conventionality. Eudoxus, thou subtlest of philosophers! thou hast indeed more followers to thy school of thought than many true philanthropists; thy students number in their ranks specimens from all professions and all creeds—statesmen, bishops, doctors, lawyers, atheists,

rationalists, deists; ay, and those, too, who profess the very highest standard of the Christian morality, men who ostensibly are absorbed in aesthetics, and who speak of the ‘Sermon on the Mount’ as their code of moral law, even they are amongst thy followers; peradventure self-deceiving, half-resisting, much-repenting, but still they surely follow thee, and although from many different points of view, one and all arrive at the same conclusion that after all, the *summum bonum* of the human race is undoubtedly *ἡδονή*. I grant that with many there is a kind of sneaking mental reservation—that the indulgence of this or that passion shall not interfere with their chance in the world to come; but the amount of self-deception that must be resorted to in order to obliterate in the enjoyment of the *esse* all thoughts of the *posse* does but add deceitfulness to vice. In passing, let me remark that in spite of Aristotle’s approbation of Eudoxus, an amusing critico-chemical experiment may be performed by bringing LOGIC to bear upon the philosopher: turning a ferret into a rat’s cage produces the same kind of result as may be gained by turning Aldrich loose upon Eudoxus.

Pardon the shop if I for a moment remark:

Quoth Eudoxus: ‘Pleasure not being praised, when it is confessedly one of the good things, proves it to be superior to all praise.’ (Like the Deity, or *summum bonum*.)

To him Aldrich, with the crucial test of syllogism:

‘*ἡδονή* is a good, but it is not praised;

Τάχαθόν, because above praise, is not praised.’

Therefore *ἡδονή* is *Τάχαθόν*.

And, lo! the rat is worried, and an undistributed middle term stultifies the proposition.

But as it would be hopeless to attempt to curb the adulation of pleasure with the assistance of so feeble and imbecile a weapon as logic, so neither do men need the theory of a bat-blind philosopher to encourage them to deify *ἡδονή*; in all this craving for self-indul-

gence is inborn, in most it is second nature; the pampering indulgent system which obtains in most nurseries, fosters and encourages the tendency, till it becomes part of the very being; and then, 'Naturam expellas furcâ tamen usque recurret.' Lord Macaulay was not far wrong when he used to say that mothers little realised how the impressions of earliest childhood left their mark upon the future life, which nothing afterwards entirely obliterated; he used to mourn over the growing spirit of religious persecution and intolerance, and declare that it greatly owed its origin to the well-known nursery rhyme—

'Old Daddy Longlegs won't say his prayers,
Take him by the left leg and throw him down
the stairs.'

'Doubtless,' he would say, 'it is most reprehensible in the ancient macropedist to neglect his devotions, but I entirely deny your right to put him to physical pain or inconvenience in consequence of this omission.' Frisky matrons, do be assured, upon the word of a Macaulay, that there is no greater mistake in the world than passing over faults in your nursery with the ready excuse, 'Oh, he is only a child!' Depend upon it that, whilst you are sleeping, a certain enemy, notorious for his skill in taresowing, will be quietly painting impressions of embryo sin, in gorgeous rainbow colours, upon the easily-moulded soft wax of your little one's mind; and when you are anxious to hang the walls with holy pictures, there will not be one atom of unoccupied space. I was wrecked, then, as I said before, upon the rock of pleasure; from my earliest boyhood I had loved devotedly the horse and hound; my earliest play-fellow was a noble staghound, out 'at walk,' and the first toy that really gave me pleasure was a gun. As I grew up to manhood, all these likings strengthened into passion, and, like the snowball, gathered others to them as they rolled; and at length, a despiser of St. Anthony, joyous, lighthearted, living for the present, with every impulse of my mercurial temperament on tiptoe to meet half-way the inevitable temptations of an Oxford life, I was

launched out to sink or swim; and, need I add, I sank?

I think the first thing that made any deep impression upon my mind at Oxford was the system of compulsory attendance at daily chapel. It is not for me to venture a decision upon the expediency or non-expediency of this system in the main; it has, I believe, been now discontinued at several colleges, but I know not with what results: I can only give an opinion upon it from a freshman's point of view; and certainly the daily service at Exeter College was a gloomy business indeed. I know nothing more likely to exert a deadening influence upon the sensitive plant of a lad's spiritual life than the daily repetition of what one could only term a miserable caricature upon the glorious service of our Liturgy. Oh! it was a piteous spectacle to look around upon the matutinal congregation in Exeter College chapel, just at that point in the service where, in places of true worship, there is supposed to be a grand choral burst of unanimous praise, in the words, 'O come, let us sing unto the Lord;' to look around, and to hear that beautiful 'Venite exultemus' antiphonally repeated, one verse in a drowsy snarl by the officiating priest, and the response in a listless, indifferent murmur, by half-dressed undergraduates, whilst the junior messenger quietly ticked off upon his list the absentees from this spiritual parade, was indeed enough, in these revolutionary days, when every parson is his own pope, and every layman his own church, to set one thinking that there must be something *NOTTEN* in the system. Undoubtedly there was a good deal that was hindering in it to the souls of those who were exposed to its baneful influence; undoubtedly some weaker brethren, who were struggling to thrust their heads above the mire around them, and who were hoping to fit themselves one day for the sacred ministry, were sensitive enough to find a stumbling-block in the unbecoming levity with which the holy office of the priesthood was treated by at least one of those who ought to have known his duty better. Surely

there was a tiny smattering of truth in the doggerel that was, I believe, written by an ambitious scout's boy, and affixed to the tail of a certain rev. gentleman's horse, which was in waiting not a thousand miles from the Turl Street, to convey him to the meet of Lord Maccolesfield's hounds! The trash ran thus:—

'Little
 Shared in common with the leopard
 A dislike of being rooted to one spot;
 And when wanted in the church
 He'd leave the service in the lurch,
 With partridges or pheasants to be shot.
 'But one day an objector, in the shape of the
 sub-rector,
 Demanded where the chaplain spent his time.
 Says he, "Oh, saddle saddle, in the stubble or
 the saddle,
 Whilst you can do my duty—ain't it prime?"'

And, in point of fact, the respected working head of the college alluded to in this elegant poem as the 'Objector,' did nearly always undertake this duty of the rev. Nimrod; but on one memorable occasion the sleepy undergrads at morning chapel waited in vain for either Nimrod or the sub-rector; a 'fast man,' possessed of more determination than principle, committed the ungentlemanly action of securely screwing up the outer 'oak' of the sub-rector's room whilst he peacefully slumbered within. The perpetrator of this outrage—whose name to this day has not transpired—was a feeble-minded but spiteful young man with a high notion of the *lex talionis*; the sub-rector had found it necessary to confine him to the college-gates for some offence, and he had thus revenged himself in kind; so effectually had he done his work, that the excellent sufferer from this practical jest was compelled to become a closer imitator of St. Paul than he ever bargained for, and descend from his window in a basket.

As to the dissipation of Oxford life, I am quite sure that fond mothers entertain a most exaggerated idea of the amount of actual vice in contact with which their darlings will be thrown at the University; they picture to themselves all the vices of a Rousseau, all the delirious passions of a younger Dumas, and they tremble for their fledglings; but it ought to be some

consolation to them to know, that, according to accurate statistical returns, there is less positive vice in the city of Oxford itself than in any other city in England of equal magnitude; and if young men will plunge into sin of a certain sort, it must be, not because temptation seeks them out, but because they seek it out resolutely, in the face of every kind of discouragement and at great personal risk to themselves.

The great sin of Oxford life consists in a really terrible exhibition of superlative selfishness, a pampering of, and pandering to, the body in a perfectly disgusting manner, and which still obtains largely in spite of the great increase of what Mr. Kingsley calls 'muscular Christianity.' If the men do cricket, boat, jump, ride, &c., more than they used to, they do it in a more self-indulgent manner; no walking up to cricket, no riding to cover; a drag and four for cricket, and a phaeton and pair to the meet are not even luxuries now-a-days. A correspondent in a recent number of the 'Times,' advocating the excessive devotion to athletic and field sports now in vogue, gives as one good result accruing from them, that 'the men do not go down to Jericho as they used to.' True; but why? Simply because 'Jericho's occupation's gone.' As an Oxonian, let me tell him that his argument is no argument at all, and I fancy that he would rub his eyes if he could see the pony carriages making erotic pilgrimages to Abingdon, Woodstock, and elsewhere; and if he could count the number of return tickets to London taken out in one term, 'Just to see my dentist, you know.'

'The self-denial of training' is all very well, but there is also a process called 'coming out of training,' and artificially working up the physique of a man into an unnatural state of development is a dangerous experiment. But, after all, the indolent High-Street-loafing is the worst of all, and is a fruitful source of future ruin. The lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life in their full and loathsome development, all owe their origin to this kind of degrading self-indulgence.

'*Si jeunesse savait.*' If young Oxonians only knew, only realised, how terribly they injure their physical powers for the rest of their natural lives, by the kind of luxurious, dawdling, indolent dissipation of what is called 'fast life,' if they could but have the scales removed from their eyes and could clearly perceive the semi-paralysis of mind, the positive stagnation of brain development, caused by nocturnal hours of smoking, tipping and Van John; the fearful extent to which the proper growth of their young brains was dwarfed and crippled by the malignant, cauterising effect of bringing the adult dissipation of old club-stagers to bear upon their green and unseasoned organisms! Ailing health for a lifetime is too frequently the price which is paid for the doubtful pleasure of a term or two of 'fast life' at Oxford. Again and again have I witnessed the results of this kind of life upon the tender brains of those who are almost schoolboys. One case especially recurs to my memory of a youth of great promise and wealth, the heir to an ancient baronetcy, who quite weakened his brain by a course of self-indulgent dissipation. On the particular occasion to which I refer, he had been up till 3 A.M., lured by the fatal fascination of 'unlimited loo,' backed up, of course, by unlimited cigars and brandy and water; he had not then learned the bitter lesson, which he has since taken home to his heart, that 'unlimited loo' is only an abbreviation for 'unlimited losing;' at 7 A.M. his scout entered his bedroom to rouse him up for chapel, and found him, still dressed, solemnly sitting upon his bed, dealing an imaginary pack of cards to an imaginary circle of gamblers; his pack consisted of his watch, his slippers, his prayer-book, and an old ace of spades. The experienced scout, in no wise disconcerted at the pitiable state of his master, quietly undressed him, got him between the sheets, and then slipped over to the '*Sub.*' and took out an '*ager*' for him. On another occasion, a very estimable young fellow—who held the office of Bible clerk at

— College, had been wasting the midnight oil at a card party; he had to make his appearance officially in the chapel on the following morning, and when the hour for morning chapel arrived, he was not inebriated, but simply mad, from unaccustomed brain tension; he was observed tripping up the chapel with unsteady gait and bloodshot eye, flapping the wings of his white surplice, and singing—

'Oh, that I had wings like a Jolly, Jolly duck!'

An iron grasp upon his shoulder, and a voice hissing in his ear, 'Mr. Willcox, sir, retire, sir, I *command* you, and come to me after chapel!' brought him to his senses, and sent him to the right-about-face, as if a cannon had gone off in his ear. Poor fellow! a severe brain fever taught him not to run off the rails again, and he now lives, a shattered wreck, and a living example of the poisonous influence of brandy and water and the Devil's pasteboards. I recollect a young man of remarkable shrewdness, a Hertford scholar and first-class man, reduced to temporary idiocy, in the same manner, by a few hours of eager gambling aided by the fumes of nicotine; he retired from the card-room tolerably early, and apparently perfectly sober; but it would seem that the sudden change into the night air was too much for him; for some lingerers returning late across the quadrangle discovered him encamped upon the gravel, under a rug, supported at the four corners by walking-sticks, and the aperture defended by a row of loaded soda-water bottles, apparently intended to represent Armstrong guns. Upon being reasoned with, he merely remarked, that he 'wash all right, shensible, shober, and sherious;' that he intended to 'take up hiah abode' where they had found him, as the locality 'shuited hiah health;' and so he wished them good evening. Pitiable, lamentable, but still as much the fault of the system as of the man. Of course I do not mean to affirm that it would be in the power of the authorities to put down absolutely such practices as long nights of smoking and cards;

but I think they might do something in advance of the mere feeble protest which now prevails, and only when these parties get noisy. In some things undergraduates are controlled beyond the veriest school-boys, and in others they have given to them more absolute liberty than is permitted by the colonel of any regiment in the service to his sub-alterns. And surely there is some excuse for this kind of treatment; for an Oxford undergraduate of 'fast' tastes, in his freshman's term, is the queerest mixture of man and boy; he has all the priggishness and conceit of a dandy Guardsman, and all the silly tricks of a schoolboy; the whole aim and object of his then existence appears to be to thwart, and irritate, and disobey the authorities in every conceivable way; and if remonstrated with, to retire at once behind the dignity of his 'manhood' (save the mark!). One estimable senior tutor, now married and done for, possessed a nervous organisation which caused him especially to shrink from contact with a dog; he most rigorously, therefore, enforced the rule as to the exclusion of these, his four-footed bugbears, from the quadrangle. What but the boyish desire to put this estimable man to confusion, after he had fined half the college for infringing the rule, could induce Mr Dash to be seen in a prominent position at his window, petting a stuffed dog, admirably got up for the occasion, as the Rev. J. P. T. passed? A furious message, to 'remove that dog at once,' was obeyed by throwing the stuffed carcass into the quadrangle at his feet!

Is not the memory yet fresh within us of many a festive bump-supper, of many a jovial evening with the Adelphi Club? We had a little clique, the ἀδελφοὶ ἀδελφῶν, who would sit long after the other members of this bacchanalian society had departed with their friends, and then adjourn to the room of one or the other to finish up with punch and cards. Many a hearty song, not always quite as immaculate, I fear, as it might have been, would ring through the still night air from that room.

It was from this little clique of ours that a certain 'poem' emanated, which was certainly not remarkable either for the power and beauty of its language, the originality of its ideas, or the elevation of its sentiment; in fact, it was decidedly of 'la race mongrel,' doggerel to a degree, but when viewed through the rosy cloud which cast its halo round the careless hearts half stupefied by cigars and punch, it represented the queen of songs, and had more melody for us than the warbling of a Patti or a Christine Nilsson. It went to the tune of the 'British Grenadiers,' and was as follows:—

- 'I'll sing you a song of Oxford, and you'll all agree with me,
That we certainly take the shine out of the sister 'varsity.
There are many halls and colleges, but none that can compare
With the one whose walls surround us, our own old Exetare.
'Just watch our men on the river, or by the cover side,
There are none can pull more pluckily, and few more boldly ride:
For, take us as a body, there are none that can compare
With the men we see around us, the men of Exetare.
'They say we get few classes, and this we'll all allow;
But if we've few men in for glory, we've fewer still for plough:
We go for mediocrity, and no men can compare
With the slow and sure and steady men, the men of Exetare.
'Our Dons are not bad fellows, of this we're all agreed;
There's an uncommon smug amongst them, his name is Jimmy
But take them as you find them, and there are few that can compare
With the Dons who try to lecture us, the Dons of Exetare.
'And when in days hereafter we've left the 'varsity,
And a loving wife sits by us with children at her knee,
We'll sing of halls and colleges, but of none that could compare
With the toast I give you now, my boys, OUR OWN OLD EXETARE.'

The last line in each verse supplied the desideratum of jovial songs—a 'rattling chorus,' and many a throat has shouted itself hoarse with an energy worthy of a better cause; for were we not grasping at a shadow and thinking we held a reality?

Most of us, at any rate, have been effectually disenchanted since then.

I think a freshman gains his first real experience of Oxford life in the lecture-room: there it is, most probably, that he picks up, or is picked up by, those men who will be his associates, and who will form his 'set,' for good or for evil, during his stay at Oxford. It would be simply impertinent in me, an expelled undergraduate, to pronounce any definite judgment upon the general subject of college lecturers; I will therefore say nothing beyond an expression of the opinion that it is just as absurd to expect every college Don, who has by dint of severe application crammed his own cranium with the requisite amount of knowledge sufficient for a fellowship, to be able to impart to others the knowledge that he has acquired, as it is to expect every person who has passed a good examination for his degree and for holy orders to be able to preach telling sermons. I believe I do not stand alone in the opinion that a good college lecturer is a *rara avis in terris*, certainly he is the exception rather than the rule; not that we were worse off at Ex. Coll. in this respect than other colleges—on the contrary; but still it is an undoubted fact that when any man was really reading, either for the schools or for a class, his first act was to obtain permission to knock off all college lectures and 'put on a coach.' Of course the utter stupidity and boyish behaviour of the lectured has as much to do with rendering this mode of instruction farcical as the dullness and vapid ignorance of some of the lecturers. It is hard to shake off the impression upon first entering a college lecture-room that you have come upon a number of grown men acting a charade, one scene of which was the fourth form at Eton under tuition.

Well do I remember the intellectual encounter between one most erudite but humdrum professor and a well-meaning but rather foggy-brained youth, to whom the development of the biceps was of far more importance than the administration of Aldrich's patent food for brains. Logic was the lecture, the

connection between cause and effect the point at issue.

'You see, Mr. Mortlake,' quoth the learned Breeze, in the dulcet tones for which he was remarkable—'you see that certain effects may reasonably be expected to follow certain causes. Now, for example, if the glass falls, Mr. Mortlake, it will probably——'

'Break,' growls Mortlake.

'Oh, no, Mr. Mortlake, how dull you are, to be sure; do, pray, pay more attention. I meant "rain." Now follow me again, I beg, in another proposition of the kind. Brandy, Mr. Mortlake—brandy is an intoxicating fluid, and therefore it ought to be——'

'Drunk, with a slight admixture of sugar and warm water to taste,' promptly replies Mortlake.

'Mr. Mortlake, sir, you are either impertinent or hopelessly dull, sir. I wished you to reply "avoided."'

During my brief experience of Exeter College occurred the celebrated 'Saint's day-lecture controversy,' which will still be in the recollection of many. It had been decided in the Olympus called the 'Common Room' that the ancient liberty of a saint's day's freedom from work was to be repealed, and lectures were announced for the following holy-day. Great was the revolutionary excitement, blood-thirsty was the meeting of sporting chartists at the 'Maidenhead,' round were the robins that were forthwith drawn up. A morning's lark with the merry harriers was in contemplation, and the unalienable rights of undergraduates were discussed with a fierce heat scarcely to be quenched even by Greenwood's excellent tap of 'bitter.' At length a suggestion was made by one youth wiser in his generation than those children of light who thought to rob us of our rights. The University Sermon! Why should we not all conceal the buckskin and the topboot beneath the decent exterior of a pair of sub-fusk continuations, and go *en masse* to the university sermon, thence to the harriers, Q. E. F.? No sooner suggested than put into execution. Empty were the lecture-rooms, full were the un-

dergraduates' benches at the university sermon. I have often wondered whether the holy but long-winded divine who on that particular saint's day had the honour to occupy the university pulpit, took the unusually large congregation as a special compliment to himself. I need scarcely inform those who are acquainted with the ferocity of the animal called Oxford Don, when fairly bearded, that the tumult which ensued was simply awful; an earthquake would be bagatelle to the *dénouement*, but the point was gained. It was proved to the satisfaction of the offended rulers in Olympus that the statute commanding attendance at the university sermon was a superior court to the one which forged the bye-laws of a private college, and to this day I believe it remaineth a *lex scripta*: 'No lectures until after the university sermon.' I blush to say that this was to most of us our first and last introduction to the undergraduates' gallery at St. Mary's.

I should far exceed the limits of this paper were I to narrate one quarter of my experiences of an Oxford lecture-room. The boyish tricks, the incorrigible idleness, the hopeless stupidity, the hacking and stammering, and other artificial means resorted to to lengthen out the sentences when the finger of the clock was drawing near to the hour of release, are they not all written in letters of fire upon the memory of every unfortunate college tutor?

Some of the construals and replies given in Oxford lecture-rooms merit for their authors the application of a birch rod far more than the wilful false quantities of the lower school at Eton. Many will recollect the case of a careless, empty-headed young fellow who thus acquitted himself in a Horace lecture of the Rev. Mr. Dozer. He was desired to commence construing at the first satire of the inimitable Quintus Horatius Flaccus—

'Qui fit, Mæcenas, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem
Seu ratio dederit, seu fors objecerit, illa
Contentus vivat?'

Evidently he had never set eyes upon the passage before, and pos-

sessed not the faintest notion of its meaning, but at it he went doggedly — 'Qui fit Mæcenas,—who made Mæcenas? ut nemo,—what, nobody? quam sibi sortem,—what sort of a fellow was he, then?'

Doubtless, also, the advocates of the modern system of education, abolishing the dead languages, will look with gloomy satisfaction upon the following murder of a language already defunct, and the postponement of whose burial is in their eyes a national scandal. The excellent Dozer was again the victim: he had desired a future ruler of the country to render into English—

'Vere novo, gelidus canis quum montibus
humor

Liquitur.'—*Georg.*, Lib. I., 43.

Blandly the 'Latinicide' began: 'Vere novo, I know well; quum, when; gelidus canis, the cold dog; liquitur, is left; montibus, on the mountains; humor, for a joke.' In those days Mr. Dozer, though deservedly popular for his affability and real kindness of heart, was not considered quite the Solon of lecturers: there was a certain wicked epigram extant, which defined with tolerable accuracy the estimation in which his critical scholarship was held—it was as follows:

'An Exeter tutor, named Dozer,
Whenever he met with a posér,
Exclaimed quite abrupt,
Why the passage is corrupt!
Pass on to the next line, said Dozer.'

Of course one of the 'incidents' of my freshman's term was 'going in for smalls.' I had just managed to scrape through the preliminary examination in Hall, 'by the skin of my teeth,' and so was obliged to go into the schools; but no *testamur*—as the little shilling slips of blue paper certifying your success are called—fell to my lot. I am quite sure that the dear ladies have no idea how objectionable, even to the susceptible heart of an undergraduate, is the sight of their sweet faces during the *viva voce* examination. A little incident occurred to myself during this examination, which, if adopted as a precedent, might help to clear the schools of these delightful nuisances—unless, indeed, we are to believe the 'Satur-

day Review;' and in that case it would but prove an additional inducement to the girl of the period. I was labouring heavily over some Homer construing, when the rustle of silk, and the indescribable little creaking of mysterious 'tournures' and 'paniers' just behind me, announced the arrival of some fair spectators of my martyrdom. My examiner, a kind-hearted man, who evidently had a keen relish for a practical joke, noticed the anxious and annoyed look which I cast over my shoulder in the direction of the fair intruders, and he shrewdly extemporised a plan for my relief, for he said directly, 'Thank you, Mr. Blanc; now turn, if you please, to the 443rd line of the 3rd book of the 'Iliad,' and commence to construe—

‘ὄνδ' ὅτε σε πρότερον Λακεδαιμόνος ἐξ
ἐρατῆν ης, κ. τ. λ.’

The scene which the poet is here describing, with a startling minuteness of detail, is a love-passage between the respondent, the Hon. Mrs. Menelaus, *née* Helen *belli teterima causa*, and the rascally young co-respondent, Mr. Paris, which, even when gilded and bejewelled by the poetry of Pope, is scarcely 'fit for publication;' but when slowly and stammeringly rendered into the baldest English by a trembling examinee, was enough to make Sir Cresswell Cresswell rest uneasily in his grave. The charm soon worked: after a little blushing and whispering, the fair occupants of the visitors' benches took flight like a flock of startled pigeons, doubtless thinking what dreadful books those Classics were!

Any one could cram a paper with anecdotes of the schools, more or less well-known; with descriptions of ferocious examiners and trembling candidates; of first-classes jeopardised by Jowettian proselytes from Balliol, stumbling over the modicum of Bible knowledge required before a class examination can commence, and vowing, when upbraided for their ignorance, that they had been so occupied with the study of the Classics, that they had not even PURCHASED THAT WORK YET!—referring to the Bible. There are, more-

over, hundreds of 'good stories' of ridiculous mistakes made in examinations on the Bible; but as they invariably owe their pungency to the fact of putting that which is intrinsically sacred in a ridiculous light, I would not be the one to defile the pages of 'London Society,' for the sake of raising a laugh, with specimens of what is nothing else than ribald jesting on Divine revelation.

Time, type, and the patience of the readers of this magazine, would all fail me were I to tell of many a rattling run upon a 'mount' from Charley Symonds' stables; of Salter, and many a 'scratch-four;' of Filthy Luker, and many a bull-nosed 'farrier.' One anecdote of the latter individual, however, I must give; 'De mortuis nil nisi bonum.' Filthy is gone, and one filthier than he carrieth on the trade. Peace to his ashes; he really was a far nobler specimen of the human race than was usually believed: he was, moreover, a born wag, a marked example of uncultivated genius, a philologist by nature. I once heard him, when put to it, invent a word that would have done credit to our American cousins over the herring-pond. A celebrated prize beagle, 'Music,' had been stolen; as a matter of course, the bereaved owner bided him to the den of the 'Filthy' one to inquire for his favourite; but he did not go to work in the right way: he irritated, instead of soothed this genius of the canine race, by implying that he knew more about the loss of the dog than he cared to own. 'Sir,' said Luker, 'I know that I am a LOCAPASTIO man, sir, but I am not a thief.' 'A WHAT man, Luker?' quoth the astonished questioner. 'A LOCAPASTIO man, sir; a man, sir, who is in a LOW CAPASTITY.' Many other words of like nature, when occasion offered, did this gutter-bred philosopher invent.

It was not my lot to mingle much with the *ton*, or to penetrate into the exclusive circle of Dons' family life. What's in a name? quoth 'Weelliams' the immortal. Answer, A good deal is in a name at Oxford, an' you would win a smile from a Don's daughter, or taste a Don's

champagne. I don't mean to say that 'Long' has the pull of 'Short,' though they are at the same college; or that 'Wynter' may show the cold shoulder to 'Summer,' or that 'Day' may blase away with impunity at 'Knight,' or that any practical advantage accrued to the two gentlemen who, by the strangest coincidence, happened to be the two Bible-clerks at Worcester College in the same year, viz., Messrs. Robinson and Crusoe;* but I do mean that a real patrician name, served up with a handle, the longer the better, is an irresistible bait to the heads of houses. In society, these honoured families are certainly keen sportsmen after 'Tufts,' and a plain 'Mister' rarely gets an invitation, except he chance to be a 'lion.' One wealthy young Christ Church 'Tuft' informed me that he had in his pocket invitations to dinner from six heads of houses for the same night—it was the night of the 'Oxford ball,' and each 'angling mamma' was anxious to parade him as of her party; but as I said before, I was neither a 'tuft' nor a 'lion,' and so never received an invitation to put my unhallowed legs beneath the hallowed mahogany. It would have saved me from my present position had I been dining with my friend the Christ Church 'tuft,' at the hospitable table of old Dr. Blinker, on that unlucky 5th of November that sealed my doom; perhaps I should not now have been speeding homewards with as fine a specimen of the academical *pulex irritans* in my ear, as the combined forces of the Exeter common-room could produce: 'Remember,

* *Vide* 'Oxford University Calendar,' 1863.

remember the 5th of November.' I certainly see no reason why the 5th of November EVER should be forgot. I was 'a freshman,' and as such, of course, in the thick of the 'town and gown,' on the 5th. Be it known, oh, ye uninitiated, that a 'town and gown' is made up of the component parts of 'town boy, very small, and inebriated freshman;' they alternately chase each other, and shout, whilst the policemen scatter the little boys, and the proctors remove the big boys. I am convinced that town and gown rows could be 'disestablished' by more judicious management. If, instead of, as is now the case, making them appear matters of moment by confining the men to college-gates, &c., the authorities would post a notice in the porter's lodge of each college and hall, to this effect: 'Senior men are requested to inform their friends among the freshmen, that the customary street brawling on November 5 is now considered neither manly nor gentlemanlike,' I cannot but think that it would be effectual, and thus publicly identifying it as a 'freshman's sport' would soon put a stop to it. But I was a freshman, and an unwarned freshman, and quite as capacious a fool as the other freshmen of my year, and so I joined the 'town and gown,' and (as I am in the confessional, I may as well make a clean breast of it) I was silly enough—nay, I should say, mad enough,—whilst being escorted home by the proctor, who happened to be of my own college, to slip into his sacred pocket an ignited Roman candle!

Hinc illæ lacrimæ!

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

VICE-REGAL EXPERIENCES.*

THE Denisons are unquestionably an extremely remarkable family. After the Napiers, truly called sons

* 'Varieties of Vice-Regal Life.' By Sir William Denison, K.C.B. Two vols. Longmans.

of Zerniah, there is hardly any similar band of brethren. One of them is the Speaker of the House of Commons, and although he has not attained to the perfection which characterised Lord Eversley, he

has well earned the peerage and pension looming in the future. Another brother was that kind-hearted and saintly Bishop of Salisbury who was so deeply endeared to his friends and to his diocese. A third is that hearty and able archdeacon who discharges his 'archidiaconal functions' with such mingled force and urbanity—St. George without the Drag on, as he has been affectionately and truly termed. Another brother is Sir William Denison, late Governor-General of the Australian colonies and Governor of Madras, who has just summed up his many official experiences by two of the most interesting and remarkable volumes which it has ever fallen to our good-fortune to peruse. Sir William's experiences have been of all sorts and sizes. He has been autocrat of the small and most singular community of Pitcairn's Island, the smallest of our possessions, and, while awaiting the appointment of Sir John Lawrence, was for a brief space of time Governor-General of India. His volumes are replete with vivid, accurate, and careful descriptions of colonial life, and in many respects will form a treasury of valuable opinions and information on colonial matters. Of his own home interior he gives us many glimpses, and it is impossible not to feel the deepest interest in himself and his family, and earnestly to hope that his return home, after twenty years' hard work, may be attended with all blessings and benefits.

Sir William was a Captain of Engineers of some years' standing, when he received, in 1846, his first appointment as Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land from Mr. Gladstone. He had, in those days, to go out in a trading-vessel, carrying with him as part of the cargo two thousand pounds' worth of furniture and goods. It seems that our Government is niggardly in respect to outfit; and, indeed, niggardliness is fast becoming a governmental characteristic. During his long colonial career he always expresses his opinions with straightforward simplicity; and though they are not

always popular ones, we think that they invariably rest upon substantial grounds. He evidently leans strongly to the opinion that our modern parliamentary institutions are not the best political training for growing colonies. He gives an unfavourable view of the convict population. The chief good is done by Wesleyans; and though one of the staunchest of churchmen, he thinks that their method and organization might very profitably be imitated. He thinks that the Church ought to employ a large number of non-commissioned officers. We have a vivid account of the social revolution effected by the gold-diggings. It seems to have visited the Church dignitaries with peculiar severity. The bishop had to paddle himself to and from his yacht, and the archdeacon had to lay the cloth, while his wife cooked the dinner. He speaks most unfavourably of the mass of people who rushed off to the gold diggings. Five hundred a year was the rent of two rooms; and people sent their clothes five hundred miles to the laundress, finding that it came cheaper. Here is a significant sentence, if we are right in our interpretation of the name: 'My correspondence with G—— has not led me to take a very hopeful view of the Church of England, or of the permanence of its connection with the State. The Church, in its more correct view of the term, will probably derive a benefit from the disconnection. I should not despair of its absorbing again those who have been driven from its bosom by mere questions of Church government.' When his time in Van Diemen's Land was over, he was transferred by the Duke of Newcastle to the government of New South Wales. Life at Sydney is placed in a very pleasant aspect, and for Sir William it certainly possessed the happiest auspices. When here he visited Norfolk Island. Here the descendants of the mutineers of the 'Bounty' had been removed. Here the Maine Liquor Law was established under rather peculiar circumstances, 'as I found that a keg of whisky had been purchased from an American whaler, of which many

had partaken so freely as to be very unwell, the captain having, for the interest of sobriety, I suppose, abstracted half the whisky, and filled up the keg with water.' The ladies of this happy race have also the free enjoyment of the suffrage. Probably Mr. Mill and Mr. Fawcett may preach an exodus into this political Arcadia. Many of the letters are to most distinguished men, on subjects of the deepest importance. Those to Lord Canning will interest the politician. Those to Sir Roderick Murchison will interest the philosopher. Sir William denounces as a false and mischievous theory the modern belief that colonies are useless encumbrances. He cannot help giving us some amusing pictures of the ridiculous colonial legislators—one member complained that the Colonial Secretary was making faces at him—and of the absurd deadlock to which legislation was occasionally brought. Then came a sudden removal to Madras: a gratifying appointment; but it was hard lines that he could not revisit England. 'Our packing,' he writes to his brother, 'will be formidable, in books especially; I fancy but few governors move about the world with a library of two thousand volumes. I know nothing positive as to my salary: people consider that it will be large enough to enable me to lay by something for our children. I hope it may; but I have confidence that God will look after my children as He has after me; and that, should I not be able to leave them what may be thought a sufficiency of worldly wealth, this want—if it be a want in His sight—will be made good to them by Him, as it may seem to Him best.' It is such touches that give to the volumes a deep personal interest, and where we are enabled to see the *dramatis personæ*, as if of an enacted tale.

In the next volume we get to India, and pass through a long series of Oriental scenes and pictures. Then came the grief, so common in Anglo-Indian life, of parting with so many children who had to go to England. Soon we come to some significant entries: 'Lord Canning spoke highly to me of Sir Robert

Napier, who was promoted for his services in the mutiny, and I had a long talk with Napier on the subject of the reorganisation of the army. The army certainly wants reorganisation, and we should be glad to see many of Sir William's wise suggestions carried out. We find instances of portentous mismanagement. Two hundred thousand pounds are spent on barracks on the top of a hill, where soldiers would not be of the slightest use. Sir William heartily approves of healthy barracks, but he suggests that they should be erected at a place where the soldier is wanted. This startling idea must have appeared to the Indian official mind a most daring and original conception. The following is an opinion which we heartily re-echo: 'I don't like the tone which the House of Commons is taking with reference to the colonies. I hold that the mother-country and the colony have a joint interest in maintaining the connection; and that the cost of defending the colony against attacks from without should be shared equally between the two.' He gives a remarkable corroboration to Sir Bartle Frere's interesting essay on India missions, in the new volume, 'The Church and the Age.' 'Very ignorant these poor creatures are, and stupid on most subjects; but they listen with evident pleasure, and a sort of *surprise* at being told of a God who loves and cares for them. They are not used to be loved or cared for, and this idea evidently finds its way to their hearts, and connects a happy feeling with their first notions of Christianity.' His opinion of the Indian in his raw state is very unfavourable: 'I cannot trust the Indian—I cannot get the truth out of him; and by leaning on him I should come to grief.' Very curious is the account of a colony of white Jews in India, who said that their ancestors emigrated from Jerusalem before the crucifixion of the Lord. Sir William takes a keen interest in the discussion of scientific questions, and has much keen criticism on the opinions of Darwin and Huxley. The native Indian courts are well defined as a mixture of

pomp and absurdity, of finery and filth. The following are references to familiar English names which crop out unexpectedly in the midst of Indian matters—

(1.) 'My dear Sir Roderick [Murchison]—Many thanks for your letter: it was a lucky day, to be marked with a white stone, when I first commenced my correspondence with you. I am glad you find something in my letters worth notice, for I feel sometimes as if I were exchanging "green backs" for gold. Your account of the doings of the Duke of Northumberland is very interesting: it is very pleasant to see a man make use of his wealth in the way the Duke is doing: no one grudges him one sixpence of an income which is spent in such a manner. Your "Lord and Pearl of Princes" must be rightly named, if he has the varied qualifications enumerated by you. You may take my word for it, however, that he is a very rare pearl, and you might dredge in vain throughout India for an oyster which would turn out such an article.'

(2.) 'I went yesterday to pay a visit to a rich Hindoo, the owner of house property in Calcutta. He lived in the centre of the native town, and the access to his house was through the filthiest of filthy lanes. In the courtyard were cages for birds, of which there were many of great value: the owner had been in correspondence with the late Lord Derby, and had got specimens from all parts of the world [1863].'

(3.) 'Mr. Chaplin and Sir Frederick Johnstone made their appearance on Thursday at a ball we gave. They are coming to stay with me while they remain at Madras, which will be only for a few days, as they move on to Calcutta by the next P. and O. steamer. Mr. Chaplin wants to kill an elephant; however, I am afraid he will not have an opportunity unless he calls in at Ceylon. Several men take advantage of the steamer, and run out here in the cool season, for a month's shooting. Sir Victor Brooks, an Irish baronet, made a very large bag last year, including elephants, tigers, &c. These latter, in some parts of the country, become a regular nuisance, carrying off

cattle and occasionally men. Last year a reward of 50*l.* was offered for one in Mysore, which had killed upwards of fifty people.'

On the lamented death of Lord Elgin, Sir William went up to Calcutta, and was Governor-General for some six weeks until Sir John Lawrence landed. It can hardly be said, perhaps, that Sir John Lawrence has in any degree extended by his rule as Viceroy the great fame which he antecedently enjoyed; indeed Lord Mayo seems a more popular Viceroy, and popularity is a large element in a Viceroy's usefulness. But we are now proceeding beyond the limits of the work. We trust that even this rapid sketch will have sufficed to give a view of these ample and remarkable volumes. We should say that much of the interest of the volumes depends on Lady Denison's diary, and her own letters and Sir William's to their relatives in England. This gives a unique character to the work. On the one hand we have constant reference to most important subjects of broad imperial interest; and, on the other hand, it has almost the interest of a story, from the constant recurrence of familiar names. We have no hesitation in expressing our conviction that Sir William has made a valuable and lasting addition to our national literature.

THE TALK OF THE TOWN.

In some important respects conversation is becoming one of the lost arts. The man who used 'to set the table in a roar' has entirely relinquished any idea of such an operation, and any attempt to revive it would be seriously resented by the table itself. Disguise the fact or explain the fact as you may, intellectual conversation is almost the hardest thing to be found under the sun. There is now no Tory Johnson or Radical Parr, the latest traditions of whose talking powers are handed about in drawing-room or club. A few *bon-mots*, a few good stories are handed about and occasionally get into the papers; but they are not many; and it hardly seems to us that the quality is very

good. Journalising people, of the Crabb Robinson species, are doubtless storing them up, and the next generation will reap the benefit of them. I suppose it would be hardly *comme il faut* to tell the current stories now. But if you meet a celebrated man, or meet those who have met celebrated men, as a rule there is very little that you can carry away. Perhaps the illustrious being has talked energetically and given you a few incisive sayings, for which you are duly grateful. Perhaps, however, the 'great creature' has kept his lips hermetically sealed. You can only admire the dishevelled locks, on which no barber's hand has of late laid irreverent touch, and the constancy and vigour with which the cloud from the cutty pipe is exhaled. It was not so, at least, in my old college days. Then we talked on, crudely and enthusiastically enough, I dare say, but still we talked on to all hours reckless of any expenditure of energy and time. How we have sat after breakfast, hour upon hour, till the waning autumn daylight admonished us that we must go into Hall for dinner, and through the charmed hours of night until the light through the eastern window told us that we must be thinking of the early Latin prayers in our cathedral chapel! These were all things of the past, and we can only wonderingly look back on the dear irregularities of those olden days. A literary age—an age which cuts up its mind into shavings for the periodicals—is chargeable with much of the decay of conversational art. Men have found out that it is better to listen than to talk—that speech is indeed silvern, but that silence is indeed golden. What is the conversational use of a man, who will not talk his best, but reserves it for his next political or social paper in the 'Saturday Review'? He would much rather imbibe than expend, pump his friends than be pumped himself. In fact, a great deal of judicious pumping goes on in society. One of the best leaders-writers who ever wrote in the 'Times' picked up his opinions from the talk of the clubs and 'well-informed circles.' Whenever a subject is ventilated with tolerable freedom

in a mixed company there is a great chance that you will find it used up in some leading article next morning, or in one of the weeklies. It rather impairs the freshness and freedom of talk to find it regularly utilised like so much sewage.

I remember an amiable French author writing a book on the 'Art of Pleasing in Conversation.' No one seems to care a rap now whether he pleases or not. On the contrary, there is a brood of men who pride themselves upon the art of being angular and unpleasant in their conversation. They have a look of serene satisfaction when they have the happy consciousness of having made themselves supremely disagreeable. When this has not degenerated into personal rudeness—and for personal rudeness a man ought always to be physically or morally kicked—this mental habit is not without a distinct value of its own. The combative, critical, cynical temper is the very pepper and salt of conversation, and on the whole ill-nature is perhaps the best substitute for wit. The fault of this order of mind is that it is eminently wanting in productiveness. It can destroy, but it cannot construct. It is analytical, not synthetic. It is eminently receptive, but gives out very little. Now and then it will give out some startling remark, just as if the light of a lantern were suddenly thrown on you, and it is not defective in a sardonic humour. Still the mental soil which cannot yield spontaneous growth, however manured and cultivated, remains hard, ungrateful soil still. For the best purposes of conversation this talk is very narrow and limited.

I am very far from agreeing with a man of misanthropic mind who considered that conversation was the bane of society. I limit that criticism to certain kinds of conversation. I am, indeed, a man of social mind. Just as Socrates declared that life was not worth living without cross-examination, so I feel that, as a human being, I must hold perpetual converse with humanity. Now our conversation, like many other departments of human life, is susceptible of being conducted with a certain amount of method. The Talk

of the Town so often frivolous and vapid, under certain conditions becomes replete with interest and instruction. The simple method is that you should become all things to all men. Try and be catholic and many-sided in views of life and society. Cultivate a habit of intellectual sympathy with every field of human activity. Never be astonished by any society or by any set of opinions that you may hear advanced in any society. Keep yourself fairly abreast with the special pursuits of men who are essentially men of a class. It so happens that on the subject of their favourite pursuits the most ignorant have their lore, and the dullest their acuteness. There is a great deal of froth to blow away from the surface, but then there are rich depths below.

For instance, I am exceedingly fond of the society of professional men. You may say that they 'talk shop,' and pedantry is identical with talking shop, whether the pedantry relates to books in general or only the making of a book for the Derby. There is something very anecdotic and gossip in the conversation of professedly literary people. The taste for literature, pure and simple, is perhaps on the decline, but there is a great deal of harmless Boewellism still lingering in the world. To such people it is a matter of the deepest historical moment that Charles Dickens has just started with his 'Edwin Drood,' and that Mr. Disraeli is on the eve of bringing out his 'Lothair.' We certainly will not say that they are wrong. They know all the gossip about the movements of different authors and the sale of their different editions; they will relate with awe whatever they have heard about Newman or Carlyle, Tennyson or Dickens; they exult in scarce books and rich bindings. It is the fault of many of those worthy people that they keep very completely in their groove. One literary man extremely well known and respected in his own particular walk assured me that he never read a single line about the American war during the whole time that it lasted. It is very different if you could get a talk with the editor of a leading magazine or with

the editor of a daily paper. The difficulty is that these men have little leisure. If now and then you can get an hour or two with them in their office you are in luck and had better make the best use of the opportunity. You will find it hard enough to get them to make another appointment, or, if they make an appointment, to keep it. Such men will give you the best attainable account of contemporary literary history. They are completely behind the scenes, can give you a history of some thirty or forty individuals who chiefly make up the literary and political press, and can shed a flood of light on all curious and well-conversed details.

This sort of people, however, rather take omniscience as their forte, and for the best Talk of the Town you must go to people who have specialities. Some people are full of the Academy. They could almost write you down the catalogue that will now be in our hands in a day or two. Others are utterly absorbed in the musical season. The subject of two rival opera houses once more is inexhaustible. They are full of the fact that Mr. Woods has entered the lists against the combined forces of Messrs. Gye and Mapleson. They will tell you the latest movements of the Marquis and Marquise de Caux. They have their stories of Pauline Lucca, and they are full of the great subject of Mdlle. Sessi's hair. People agreed that Mdlle. Sessi's voice and manner were exceedingly good, but somehow the Talk of the Town, taking the cue from Paris, ran very much on the subject of Mdlle. Sessi's fine and abundant hair. Then the musical talk easily runs into dramatic talk; but this travels into details where it is almost impossible for outsiders to follow. Actors certainly seem to keep up a raking fire of criticism upon each other. That wonderfully pretty actress has only a very poor brain; her fine face is never lit up with any genuine enthusiasm; this famous but obscene actor is now deaf and *passé*. Then the talk is a perpetual ring of changes on such names as Robertson, Byron, St. John, Boucicault. It is an example how closely the stage seeks to reflect the

day, that on the evening of the Oxford and Cambridge boat race brings out a little play on this subject, done in a skilful and gentlemanly way. One result of the system of plays running for hundreds of nights is that actors have all their days thrown on their hands. Some of them become very horsey men, or show other evil fruits of an ill-spent leisure; but some of them so lay out their time that they may probably rise to eminence in intellectual pursuits. The stage might be the means of an infinite amount of good if its tone were more elevated and its errors eliminated; some progress of improvement might be made, but that progress might be quickened. That man would do infinitely well who could reconcile the feud between morals and amusements. Among professional talkers I rather lean to the talk clerical. Mr. Jeafferson, in his laborious book on the clergy, might have given us a chapter on the subject. The parsons are rather ahead of the politicians. They are discussing keenly the separation of Church and State, and the town parsons don't seem to care much about it. They are looking forward with great interest to the raid upon the Ritualists. Popular preaching has very much gone out, and the taste for short sermons has spread from the people to the parsons. A most remarkable exception is the course of Lenten lectures delivered by that impassioned orator Mr. Liddon, who always draws together a concourse which even Mr. Gladstone might envy; and almost within a stone's throw of the church where they are given another large audience assembles to hear that fervid preacher, Stopford Brooke. It is very curious to go away from a clerical club to a legal club, say to one of the half-dozen which exist in the Temple. So, without naming any club, which might be unfair, suppose we go into some professedly atheistical company. This sort of company is not at all unfrequent, and is even to be met with at times among the parsons themselves. There can be little doubt that at the present time there is more undisguised formal materialism and unbelief among thinking people than

has been known within living memory, or a date beyond that. Materialism is, in point of fact, extremely fashionable now. One reason is that there is an immense deal of sympathy felt and expressed towards those opinions by those who believe with Robertson of Brighton, that men may possess an essential Christianity apart from historical Christianity. It must also be owned that while in a bygone age infidelity and immorality have been almost commensurate terms, the professors of free opinion, with the remarkable exception of Mr. Lecky, set forth a very high standard of moral conduct. There is hardly anything more remarkable in the Talk of the Town than the extreme readiness with which it will discuss subjects of semi-religious interest, especially in connection with the scientific controversy. There is not a journal that will not now say its say on subjects absolutely tabooed by the press a quarter of a century ago. The names of Huxley and Tyndall are constantly recurring in one direction; the names of Mr. Mill, of Mr. Spencer Herbert, of Mr. Bain, are constantly recurring in a parallel direction. It is astonishing how many people go to the secular services in St. George's Hall, and all seem to appreciate the powerful argumentative and oratorical ability evidenced by Professor Huxley. I do not know what may be the case in provincial districts, where persons are bucolic, and allow their minds pretty well to run into turnips; but in London, at least, it seems to me that they are perfectly well versed in all the controversies respecting the deeper questions of the day, while their own point of view is curiously misunderstood or misrepresented among scientific men.

In scientific talk you can never help picking up what is interesting and instructive. Medical talk is always good; the doctor can tell a good story, and tell it neatly. Doctors are always particularly skilful in their manipulation of each other's character and conduct. They have just had a *cause célèbre* to themselves in Dr. Williams v. the Duke and Duchess of Somerset. They have

certainly made common cause with their illustrious brother in the matter of this violent and most unjust libel. Dr. Williams's pamphlet, though the interest is so painful, has been extensively circulated. It so curiously happened that the Solicitor-General, despite the promptings of the junior counsel in the cause, by his way of stating the case caused the pamphlet to be republished broadcast over the country; and though there was an ample apology and retraction, the pamphlet became necessary. The other night the Solicitor-General was charged, in the House of Commons, with having been asleep during part of a debate in which he subsequently spoke. Perhaps here, too, he was nodding. The lawyers say that Sir John Coleridge might be Speaker of the House of Commons, if he so desired, on the threatened retirement of Mr. Denison, and he would make a good Speaker. It is to be said for the Attorney-General that though his legal claims would be hardly considered to extend beyond a County-Court judgeship, yet he is a man of great accomplishments, and has succeeded in obtaining the ear of the House. I have heard great complaints of Members of Parliament giving versions of their speeches at dinner-tables, before or after they have formally delivered them. This sort of thing ought to be put down. There seems to be a sad dearth of genius and ability in the House of Commons. Mr. Plunket bore himself worthily of what is perhaps the greatest oratorical name of the century; but it is remarkable how very few men, with the exception of Sir Roundell Palmer—who is earning the gratitude of the country by the wisdom and disinterestedness of his speeches—give the result of their independent thought and experience on the great questions before the country. One reason is that the House of Commons has more than ever the character of a plutocracy. Men vote straight with their party, not in accordance with their independent convictions. A plutocracy rarely possesses any large stock of independent convictions.

I do not, however, consider it

necessary to illustrate my theory of conversation with examples, which I appear to myself to be in some danger of doing. My notion is, that though you have not got men who are great conversationalists, yet by going to a number of men you may obtain a good deal of conversation. A prolonged argument with a man is a keen intellectual exertion, as much so as making a speech or writing an article, and you avoid this when you do your talk in detail. I cannot but think that there is generally a way of getting at a man's special point, if he sees that you are kindly, frank, and in earnest; and as you are able to number on your roll of friends men of most diverse characters and minds, so you may be able to gather up even from the talk of the town that material which, at a later time and under a changed form, becomes history and literature.

COUNT BISMARCK.*

A very remarkable biography of Count Bismarck has lately been translated by Mr. Kenneth Mackenzie, from the German. The book is an extraordinary one, and, we confess, puzzles us sorely. So extraordinary a familiarity with the details of a living statesman's life has perhaps never been manifested in literary history. Our first notion was that much of the work was pure invention. But we are bound to say that our suspicions have given way; and we see here an extremely careful and circumstantial account, collected from every possible channel of information, of the career of the great Prussian minister. Still we cannot understand how we come to be favoured with so many of Count Bismarck's private and confidential letters to his nearest relations as are here given. One of the letters, indeed, was purchased at a charitable bazaar; but we are not told where the others came from. The illustrations, numerous and picturesque enough, are often a little sensa-

* 'The Life of Bismarck, Private and Political.' By J. G. Hesketh. Translated and Edited by Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie. With upwards of one hundred illustrations. London: James Hogg and Son.

tional and a little absurd. The whole tone of the volume is one enthusiastic, indiscriminate paucity upon Bismarck. The book is in a high degree open to adverse criticism; but it is still one of the most extraordinary and life-like volumes of contemporary biography with which we are acquainted.

They certainly take great liberties with the characters of public men in Germany, greater even than is the case in England. We have stories of Bismarck's beery days as a student, of his duels and his love affairs. Even in 1864 we find him writing: 'I have just been for an hour in the Volksgarten, unfortunately not incognito, as I was seventeen years ago—stared at by all the world. This existence on the stage is very unpleasant when one wishes to drink a glass of beer in peace.' Here is an incident of early days: 'At another establishment Bismarck had a little adventure. He had just taken a seat, when a peculiarly offensive expression was used at the next table concerning a member of the Royal Family. Bismarck immediately rose to his full height, turned to the speaker, and thundered forth: "Out of the house! If you are not off when I have drunk this beer, I will break this glass on your head!" At this there ensued a fierce commotion, and threatening outcries resounded in all directions. Without the slightest notice Bismarck finished his draught, and then brought the glass down upon the offender's pate with such effect that the glass flew into fragments, and the man fell down, howling with anguish. There was a deep silence, during which Bismarck's voice was heard to say, in the quietest tone, as if nothing whatever had taken place, "Waiter, what is to pay for this broken glass?"'

But it must not be supposed that the beery element predominates. The author and editor have done their best to give us a clear account of the growth of Bismarck's mind and career; of his successful exertions to give solidarity to the Prussian throne; and of the patriotic German feeling that has been the basis of his aggrandisement of Prussia. We

trace his diplomatic career at Frankfurt, where he thoroughly mastered the tortuous web of the diplomacy of the small states; at St. Petersburg; and at Paris, where he learned to match himself against the astuteness of Napoleon. The pacification of the Luxembourg was, in its way, as decisive as the battle of Sadowa. In such a career there are many striking scenes, none more so than his visit to Prince Metternich at his château of Johannisberg, on the Rhine. The book is a vivid record of a great career, in many varied aspects of political and social life, and sheds much light on German politics, perhaps just now the most important politics of Europe.

RECENT POETRY.

When we come to look at the poetry of the season, after Mr. Tennyson's 'Holy Grail' no work challenges a higher degree of attention than the writings of Mr. Morris. It is to the credit of Mr. Morris that, after his first volume of poems, which, with great promise, had only equivocal success, he preserved a dead silence for ten years. It almost seemed that nothing would induce him to break his silence; but now he has begun to publish poetry, it seems that nothing will induce him to leave off publishing poetry. To say the ungracious truth, we are beginning to weary of Mr. Morris. He has given us three or four big volumes of poetry, and there is no reason in the nature of things why he should not give us thirty or forty. He can never exhaust the stores of classic and romantic fables; and any classic or romantic story is susceptible of being presented according to Mr. Morris's mode of presentation. There is always sweetness, tenderness and humanity—'linked sweetness long drawn out'—and a faculty of presenting a series of distinct pictures before the mental eye; and his narrative babbles on with all the volubility of a Froissart or Monstrelet. His poems are, in fact, versified novelettes, very much after the fashion of the 'Decameron' or 'Pentameron;' and we doubt if, in any high sense of the

term, they can justly be entitled poetry. There is little concentration of thought, little energy of phrase, no delineation of character, no unity of action. We are not such Pharisees as to object to careless rhymes and verbal expletives; and we acknowledge that Mr. Morris leads us as unresisting captives with his beguiling verse. He leads us into the dreamland of fable, where we feel all the sweetness and lassitude of summer days, and yield up ourselves to pleasure and idleness. But still we think that true poetry ought to have something stirring and invigorating: that it ought to enable us to rally the moral energies, to leave us in some measure refreshed and ennobled. Now there is nothing of this sort about Mr. Morris's poems. They are essentially sensuous; sometimes they are even sensual. There is something extremely Pagan about the whole conception of them. There is no doubt that Mr. Morris has real genius. Many a choice passage might be adduced in proof of this assertion. But his tone is too low, his style is too diffuse, to admit of his being associated with our greater poets. We shall have four bulky volumes of the *Earthly Paradise*, infinitely bigger than the four volumes of Mr. Browning's 'Ring and the Book,' not to mention the huge 'Life and Death of Jason,' and a new edition of the earlier poems and translations of *an Icelandic Saga*. This is rather hard lines. It is time that Mr. Morris's friends should manfully endeavour to put him under some sort of literary restraint, and remind him that even in literary matters there is, or ought to be, some sort of Statute of Limitations.

To each of his poems Mr. Morris prefixes some sort of 'Argument,' after the fashion of Greek plays and modern poems imitative of the Greek. His titles are briefer and vaguer than those presented by the clear Hellenic mind. Thus he has an argument to the poem quaintly entitled 'The Land East of the Sun and West of the Moon.' * This tale, which is set forth as a dream, tells of a churl's son who won a fair queen to his love, and afterwards lost her, and yet in the end was not deprived of her.' Then we have the

'Story of Acontius and Cydippe,' which Lord Lytton tells so well in the 'Lost Tales of Miletus,' with the brief argument, 'A certain man coming to Delos, beheld a noble damsel there, and was smitten with the love of her, and made all things of no account but the winning of her, which at last he brought about in strange wise.' This is the kind of programme to which we are invited; but instead of sweeping, as the true poet should, the whole diapason of human life and passion, Mr. Morris is simply and entirely the poet of earthly love.

We have a most sincere kindness for Mrs. Hervey, and give a hearty welcome to her 'Gift for all Seasons.' * We do not feel precluded by the fact that some of the most brilliant of these poems have appeared in the pages of 'London Society,' from endeavouring to do justice to the poems in their collected form. Mrs. Hervey will, however, forgive us for saying that we have seen higher efforts of her muse even than those which we find in these pages. She has a true touch of lyric genius in these poems, and evidences of a deep, generous nature, such as belongs to the true poet. Our regret is that, instead of a cluster of pearls, somewhat carelessly strung together, Mrs. Hervey has not concentrated her genius on some single poem of some extent and unity. Such poetic stories as 'Lear's Fool' and 'A Strange Courtship' indicate how truly she could give a poetic embodiment to the scenery and incidents of our trite modern life. Amid such a multitude of lyrical pieces it becomes extremely difficult and somewhat invidious to make a selection. We can truly say that any of our readers would do well to keep this charming volume at hand, and refresh mind and spirit by occasional recurrence to its pages. There is an affecting little poem on the Prayer of Queen Caroline Matilda of Denmark, murdered in her twenty-third year—one of the darkest episodes in modern history. The prayer, written by the captive queen on her prison window, was, 'Oh, keep me

* 'Our Legends and Lives. A Gift for all Seasons.' By Eleonora Louisa Hervey. Trübner and Co.

innocent, make others great!' Mrs. Hervey's last verse is:

'Great Heaven confounds thy prayer. Now
thou dost see
How God in love, not hate,
Took back thy innocence in taking thee,
And, taking, left thee great.'

Here is an exquisite little lyric, and with this we must positively hold our hand:

'TEARS.

'Would some kind angel give me tears—
It seems a little thing,
A child's first need—I would not ask
The gems that crown a king.
'The glad peace-bringers of the storm
Are drops the sun smiles through;
The healer of the parching rose
Is but a bead of dew.
Yet what am I, an atom sole
In Heaven's creative plan,
That I should ask the tenderest gift
God ever gave to man?'

One or two more volumes of poems might well be noticed. 'Faith Græme and other Poems,'* by Eleanor Watson, show much good taste and good feeling; and a few of them indicate greater promise than their present performance. I notice this volume because it is typical of

* 'Faith Græme, and other Poems, Sacred and Miscellaneous.' By Eleanor Watson.

many similar volumes. It is very nice that ladies of refined mind and intellectual tastes should fill up their leisure by writing fairly printable poetry; but we think that, as a rule, they would do well to keep their poetry in the sacred retirement of their desks until the time comes when their matured judgment truly decides that they are worthy of publication. Something more than the record of simple, sincere, graceful feeling is requisite to constitute poetry.

We have much pleasure in expressing our conviction that Mr. Grant's work on the Church Seasons, in several respects is valuable and unique.* It performs a double or treble function. As a sacred Anthology it is an excellent one. It shows great poetical taste and an extraordinary amount of literary investigation. Mr. Grant has gone to far and profound sources; and, at the same time, his work is extremely rich in extracts drawn from the whole range of modern sacred song. The volume also contains much ecclesiastical information and sound literary criticism.

* 'The Church Seasons, Historically and Practically Illustrated.' By Alexander H. Grant, M.A.



AT THE ZOO.

LONDON SOCIETY.

JUNE, 1870.



ON THE CROSS OF THE SWORD.—Page 533.

SOCIAL USES OF GUARDSMEN.

WE have tried Hyde Park without the Serpentine, and the results of the experiment cannot be said to be eminently satisfactory.

VOL. XVII.—NO. CIL

But has it ever occurred to any one to think what London deprived of Hyde Park itself would be? The comparison of the play of 'Hamlet'

2 I

with the omission of the part of the royal protagonist is as feeble as it is trite. The season without its scandals; the season minus its intrigues; society without its flirts; the drawing-rooms of dowagers without their gossip; the club—we take the standard of the popular idea—without its rumours; Brighton without its *divorces* and *divorcies*; Scarborough without its elopements—each of these, if the suggested bereftment were to be carried into execution, would seem institutions flat, stale, and unprofitable enough in all conscience. In a word, society would find itself generally out of joint if any one of its recognised and essential orders or institutions were to be straightway blotted out of existence. We hear, indeed, dim echoes of a report to the effect that the reforming of the face of the earth is a scheme already in contemplation. The present is an adventurous age, and the pioneers of modern progress lightly rush in where the apostles of a more old-fashioned and reverential creed would have feared to tread. There is no knowing at what point innovation is to stop. Who shall say that some plan analogous to Dean Swift's famous proposal for the utilisation of infants in Ireland may not be next promulgated and carried? that one fine morning the world may not be startled with learning that an association has been formed for the extinction of old fogeys? or that a select parliament of the disciples of social iconoclasm has unanimously passed a resolution to the effect that it is desirable that spinster ladies of a certain age should forthwith cease as an establishment to exist? It may be said that the world would still manage to get on if either of these measures of destruction were consummated; that the network of society would not be wholly unwoven; that balls would still be given; that garden parties would not pass away; that the fun of flirtation would remain; and that we should have no serious reason to be merged in incurable regret for what had been done. Nor is it likely that fashionable humanity will find it-

self, its pleasures, and its routine very perceptibly affected by the reduction and destruction of Mr. Gladstone and his friends, so far as they have yet proceeded. Supposing, however, they were to go a step further, and, not content with discharging working men from the docks, closing the doors of the Woolwich and Sandhurst academies, and reducing the number of *in prospectu* ensigns in the line, were to come to the conclusion that it was, on the whole, advisable for the British guardsmen entirely to be eliminated from our military economy, how would society feel then? Mr. Lowe might quite conceivably take it into his head, and infect Mr. Cardwell with the idea, that these show sons of Mars in no way contribute to the sum of our national prosperity; that they are creatures ordained for purposes of consumption rather than production; and that the sooner they are got rid of as domestic and military encumbrances, the better for the Government and the governed alike. We repeat our question—What, in the event of such a threat, would be the feelings of society then? What protestations would there be—would there not be—on the part of diplomatic menages, of double daughters, of the given and takers of dinners and dances, and entertainments of every kind, order, and degree? What would be the feelings of countless earnings freights of be-unalined and pained divinities, when, on coming down Pall Mall, they looked up in vain at the bay window of the compact little mansion, which all the world knows is the Guards' Club, for a glimpse of those warriors mustachioed or *imberbes*, youthful or mature, who are, *par excellence*, the metropolitan depositories of gossip, the central sources of myriad episodes of flirtation—who, if the popular view be correct, are the chosen sons of pleasure in all its phases; whose prime mission it is to saunter elegantly through existence; who flit like butterflies from one hunting-ground of bliss to another; who know no more toilsome campaigning-ground than that of St. James; who

bivouac in Belgravian salons; and whose roughest billet is a well-selected country-house? The consideration of such a contingency, however improbable or remote, is sufficiently appalling; and the most superficial examination into the social uses of these gilded heroes, will serve to impress the mind with a wholesome sense of contemplative horror at such a deprivation to humanity as that which—*di omni avertant*—has presented itself for a moment to our alarmed vision.

At the first flash of panic consequent upon the bare conceivability of such a piece of official iconoclasm, it was natural, as it was polite, that the spectacle of feminine trepidation should be the primary object thrown out into lurid relief to arrest our imagination. It is true, as we shall presently show, that the disastrous effects of the abolition of guardsmen would not end here; but for reasons which may be shrewdly surmised, though they cannot be assigned with certainty, the representatives of the army, in company with the representatives of the church, undoubtedly enjoy a singular priority in the admiration and solicitude of the fair tenants of the drawing-room. Why, in passing, let us ask, should divines and warriors respectively occupy such a high place in feminine favour? Woman, we know, is essentially a creature who looks for what certain shortsighted traders, by-the-by, are now demanding—protection. She is a clinging animal. It is her nature to trust to the strong to defend her in her weakness. We are not now speaking, it is scarcely necessary to say, of that *partus temporis maximus*, we had almost written *pessimus*, the aggressive championess of woman's rights, whose war-cry is woman's wrongs? We have in view merely those creatures 'not too bright or good for human nature's daily food,' and according to this view, adhering to the antiquated notion that our madames and demoiselles require their champions themselves, there is perhaps a natural fitness in the esteem in which they are pleased to rank the officers of the army, and the

officers of the church. The former they may aptly regard as the embodiments of the physical protection to which their own physical feebleness may trust: the latter as the ministers of the potent weapons which are to guard them against ghostly foes. In the follower of the god of war they recognise the strong right hand which is to secure them against external injury and force: to the members of the priesthood they may look for that defensive armour which is to teach them to repel the attacks that are from within. Or shall we have hit upon a truer explanation of the phenomenon in question if we say that it is the association of heroism, ghostly or carnal, which the feminine imagination weaves round the profession of parson and soldier alike, that constitutes the main attraction—that divine and warrior enjoy their popularity with our women because the susceptible creatures discern in each class so much typical valour, such undying capacity of endurance and effort? Or, lastly, must we take a much more prosaic view of the whole question than either of the foregoing, and believe that not an appreciation of romance, but a vivid innate sense of respectability is at the bottom of the feminine partiality? There is—*pace* the Misses Beckers and Cobbes of the day be it spoken—an intense conservatism about women; an ineradicable preference for the orthodox over the heterodox, a profound approval of the established and recognised as against the disestablished and unrecognised. Now, the callings of priest and warrior are both conspicuously the reverse of anomalous. They are each of them state institutions; their position and their value are universally admitted; their thoroughgoing respectability cannot for a moment be called into question. A clergyman is supposed to be a gentleman; officer and gentleman are conventionally almost convertible terms. The presumptive guarantee which either profession affords of the immaculate irreproachability of the professor—are we to see in that the true secret of the feminine preference?

However, whether either of these theories be true, or whether we ought to look at the matter from a point diametrically opposite to any of those from which we have regarded it, whether the sentiment which impels some young ladies to flirt with curates in black coats, and others to ogle subalterns in red ones, be radically one and identical, or whether it be different—those of our daughters whose mental organization inclines them to esteem the rigid proprieties as paramount selecting the parson, those who have in their composition a wicked element of Bohemianism which causes them to admire the traditional character of the devil-may-care, wine-bibbing, girl-kissing warrior, fixing upon the soldier as the god of their idolatry—however, we say, this may be, the subject is one which we may not pursue further. The smiles in which the guardsman perennially basks arise from causes which do not involve the sifting of this problem to the bottom. He, lucky fellow, occupies a ground altogether different from that upon which his brothers (by courtesy) at arms stand. We have every wish to do all possible justice to the potential heroism of our guardsmen, but we cannot think that it is the association of prodigious bravery, or extravagant romance, or inveterate respectability which invests these fortunate creatures with the favour they enjoy. Society is pretty well divided into workers and non-workers; it possesses its special elements of utility and its special elements of embellishment. Your parson may be all very well in his way—admirable in his parish, and as little objectionable as possible in his church. Utility and work—these are his specialities. On the other hand, the primary social function which our guardsmen discharge, the final cause of their being is, properly speaking, the direct antithesis of this. They constitute the ornamental fringe of the parti-coloured network of society. They are things of beauty—we won't finish the quotation. It was said of a certain parliamentary speaker that he had nothing to say,

and said it in a very gentlemanlike way. Our guardsmen have nothing to do, and they perform it in an equally satisfactory manner. 'Nothing to do,' that is, by comparison: all language is relative, and the social functions of the guardsman imply, in reality, about as much of total absence of employment as did those of the 'Cavalier Servente' in 'Beppo':—

• But "Cavalier Servente" is the phrase
Used in politest circles to express
The supernumerary slave who stays
Close to the lady as a part of dress.
Her word the only law which he obeys,
His is no sinecure, as you may guess;
Coach, servants, gondola he goes to call,
And carries fan and tippet, gloves and all.

It would be, doubtless, exceeding the limits of veracity to describe the duties of the guardsman as quite as arduous as those which are here metrically portrayed; but, on the whole, it is not too much to say that the labours of the guardsman on active service at home are not much inferior to those of the captain in an ordinary line regiment on active service abroad. On the authority of Corporal Trim we know what is the career of the foreign campaigner in a hostile land: 'Standing for twelve hours together in the trenches—engaged, for months together, in long and dangerous marches—harassed in his rear to-day—harassing others to-morrow—detached here—countermanded there—resting the night upon his arms,' and enduring what not other hardships. But different though they may be in kind, do the duties which the guardsman has to go through differ much in severity of degree? Dancing night after night is almost as trying to the sinews and the system as an indefinite amount of marching and counter-marching, or duty in the trenches. Are there not men who would far sooner face an enemy's fire than the artillery, bewitching or irate, of feminine eyes? A colonel who is a bully, is, after all, not very much worse than a mistress who is a tyrant and a coquette. It may be a mortification to human nature to be summoned to parade at unreasonable hours; but to be liable to be summoned to ride, pic-nic, garden-

party, flower-show, or fête endlessly, and with the utmost brevity of nuisance, is a dispensation in which the finger of a severer fate may be recognised by some. It is really a question between the hardships of drawing-room duty and camp duty; and we have not the slightest doubt that if a well-worked chaperon was to be consulted on the point, she would say that the latter was infinitely the preferable of the two—the less monotonous and the more inspiring.

We may as well state at once that we are not concerned here with the traditional guardsman of muscular romance. Him we know well, and too well, already: *intus et in cute novimus*. We know him in all his different degrees, kinds, orders, and types—from the giant whose face wears the appearance of a promiscuous jungle of tawny hair, down to the beardless pink-and-white youngster, with hands delicate as a woman, but with a grasp like a vice; who toys effeminately with his silken moustache, but who, if it was required to fell an ox, would certainly not prove unequal to the occasion; who is the pet of the drawing-room, but an uncommonly dangerous opponent in the prize-ring; who breaks a woman's heart as complacently as he pares his nails or drinks his claret; who has a penchant towards contracting official connections within the province in which Lord Penzance reigns; and who is alternately blessed by languishing blondes as an angel, and cursed by amorous brunettes as a monster of inhuman cruelty. Blessings or cursings, it makes little difference enough to your 'Berties' and your 'Seraphs' and your 'Cherubs', to quote the approved sobriquets given by these fiction-mongers to the curled, cool, cynical, waxen-faced young puppies who go in for an intrigue merely that they may regale their Eton schoolmates in the smoking-room with its details, and inveigle magnificent heroines in love-traps, in order that they may discuss the absurdity of the situation over their burgundy after dinner, or in the intervals of loo at night. The ideal guardsman of this

mode has held the stage quite long enough. Mr. Whyte-Melville has a great deal to answer for, *in re* his uncommonly clever and amusing 'Digby Grand;' and from the spawn of Mr. Lawrence's sensational imagination a host of feeble imitators have developed a very disgusting crop of coxcombs, braggarts, and libertines.

We have already sketched in outline the guardsman as he is, and have indicated his uses as they are. It is his business to act as a sort of ornamental figure-head for society generally, to hold himself in constant readiness for drawing-room duty of all kinds, and for every occupation which can be considered legitimately to come within the range of drawing-room duty. The House of Commons is said to be the very best club in London; and what is said of our representative assemblage at Westminster may be said with equal truth of our Guards. It would, indeed, be possible to institute a very reasonable comparison between the senator and the guardsman. Social patronage of a certain order comes legitimately within the province of each. Your average guardsman can scarcely be said to have any profound critical insight into the rationale of literature or the fine arts. His verdicts may possess the merit of terseness and sometimes of truth. It was once the fashion for the man of war to ignore the arts of peace; for the wielder of the sword to despise the wielder of the pen; for the soldier, whose drama is action, to look with contempt upon the artist whose action is drama. The times have changed now, and the guardsman has developed into a patron of literature and the stage—of 'the profession' generally. Other than purely military circles possess their charm for him. You shall see him at intellectual or literary clubs. He is proposed for the Garrick or the Arts as a gentleman endowed with literary, artistic, or scientific sympathies, as the case may be. He carves his way into minor associations of a similar kind, and is good enough to record his opinion to you, after he has been spending the evening in one of

these haunts, that 'these literary fellows are so devilish amusing, you know.' The guardaman is in great force generally on 'first nights' at theatres. On such occasions you can very often see a group of these gentlemen making their way into the stalls, just as the piece of the evening is going to commence. They are obliging enough to give their neighbours generally the benefit of their critical opinions, in tones sufficiently audible, as the interest of the drama unfolds. You can scarcely fail to recognise the guardaman by the intimate personal knowledge which at such times he lets you understand he has of the actors and the actresses. Perhaps he is going to sup with some of them when the performance is over; at any rate, he will find opportunity to give them a few words of encouragement behind the scenes, between the acts. If the play is a success, it is something to know what a guardaman thinks; if it fails, well, this public-spirited son of Mars has done all that his personal presence and marked approbation can do to contribute to an opposite result. There is a certain little *sodalitium*, whose headquarters are in one of the streets immediately contiguous to the Strand, famous—the better halves of the members will correct us, infamous—for its late suppers in particular, and late hours in general. Here the gentlemen of 'the profession' love to congregate and regale themselves on tripe and sausages: here, too, you will occasionally discover a small batch of guardsmen. They are telling their favourite actor what they think of his play that night, and their *protégé* acknowledges the compliment with thanks, or receives the rebuke with humility. The conscious exercise of this power of patronage is pleasant enough for the warrior; but how about the object of it? Well, if the *protégé* chooses to acquiesce in this approving condescension, which is tantamount to good-natured contempt, he knows best, and there is nothing more to be said.

You will never go to a public

dinner, in the present day, given to some great representative of literary, pictorial, or histrionic art, without discovering an imposing ornamental fringe of guardsmen duly decorating the table. The next morning you may take up the paper and find that 'at the farewell banquet given last night to Mr. So-and-so, in addition to a large array of genius, there was a numerous attendance on the part of gentlemen of rank and fashion.' Sit next to one of these luminaries of the feast, and you will have the opportunity of hearing his opinion on the topics of the day generally. He will discourse on art, literature, or the stage. His vocabulary of panegyric may be somewhat limited: there may be discernible a decided tendency frequently to recur to the regulation epithets and expletives of 'deuced clever' and 'infernally good;' but, after all, he gives you a view, and as, to a certain extent, the guardaman is the representative of a large and important social section, and neither actor nor author appeals to a class public, the view is not without its value, and is, as such, worth having.

These histrionic proclivities of the guardaman render him, as a rule, remarkably serviceable in the management of amateur theatricals. On such occasions it is clearly his mission to be utilised to the utmost extent. It is a real charity to teach him to occupy his time. And, on the whole, he does not dislike the sense of the importance which attaches to him as a man idle, indeed, by nature, but capable of great things by art. Once fairly rouse him into energy, and he is indefatigable. He will hunt up acting editions with exemplary patience, will go into the mysteries of theatrical costumes; nay, if he has any dexterity with his pencil—an accomplishment not as uncommon with the class as might be expected—he will very likely condescend to devise a dress himself. There is something quite touching in the spectacle of the careful study which the bearded warrior will give to the part that he is called upon to get up. He carries it about with him

in his pocket; you may see him taking fiftful glances at it in the smoking-room of his club; it lies on his toilet-table while he is occupied with his back hair; he will ask you, in beseeching tones, to dodge him in it, for the purposes of testing his perfection. For two or three whole weeks before the eventful night you may know, from his pre-occupied look, that there is seated upon his manly bosom the burden of a great care. In his solitary moments he rehearses before the looking-glass; when he is in company he is given to fits of moody reverie, during which you may observe his lips mechanically moving, as if in silent soliloquy with himself. The poor fellow is, in truth, repeating to himself the lines which he has to commit to memory and to deliver to an enraptured audience in a West End or country house drawing-room. Society is under a great debt to its self-sacrificing hero.

But the demands of society upon its guardsmen do not end here. It is well worth while to notice the effect of the entrance of one of these tawny-moustachioed, immaculately-arrayed warriors into a drawing-room of fair occupants.

'By Jove, enough to make a fellow nervous, you know: ain't much up to that kind of thing, you know,' the poor fellow will tell you; 'but hang it, positively feel inclined to blush. By Jove, those girls, they literally mob one when one comes into the room; expect you to know everything, you know—who's dead, buried, or married; who's eloped with who?' Strict grammatical accuracy is not always our guardsman's strong point, perhaps we should rather say it is the exception. 'What's the betting on Mrs. Flinder's bolting with Skyaway before the season's out, and all that sort of thing, you know. Gad, a fellow feels quite overcome, you know.'

And as Captain Fitzinain finishes this unusually eloquent address, he sinks down into his easy-chair exhausted, overcome with a sense of the commensurate magnitude of the claims of society upon him, and

his own policy of enterprising self-sacrifice. As the man of war refreshes himself with nicotine, the true nature of his position begins to dawn upon him. He begins vaguely to comprehend that a man who plumes himself on nothing to do, may gradually discover that there is nothing which he is expected to leave undone. *Nunquam magis negotiosus quam cum otiosus*—we beg the captain's pardon for troubling him with 'that confounded Latin,' which he probably left behind him when he quitted Eton; but we cannot repress a quotation which is so singularly apt.

'People work me like a galley-slave. Think we can be always at their beck and call: on my honour,' continues our friend, 'to hear the way in which they suggest dinners at Richmond, picnics, and the deuce knows what else, would fancy that a fellow only lived to please 'em. By Jove, I swear I've engagements half a dozen deep for the next three weeks. Can't dine quietly without having to rush off to some infernal place. Gad, it's killing me. I think I shall make a premature bolt for the moors.'

The picturesographically sketched by the well-to-do victim of his situation is in all its essentials perfectly correct. Society is very properly *exigeant* with its pets. The guardsman is not allowed the free run of salons and boudoirs for nothing. He must expect to contribute his proper share towards the amusement and gratification of his idolizers. Such being the case, it is quite true that he is expected to know everything—everything, that is, which constitutes valuable and entertaining knowledge in the eyes of the fashionable world. Scandal, gossip, chit-chat—these are his *métier*. Your guardsman is able to whisper into feminine ears all the latest naughty doings of great people, the while he twirls their fair owners round in the valse, as well as to make agreeably heartless love to them when he has secured them a seat in the intervals of a dance, or has planted himself by their side behind the judicious shadow of umbrageous orange trees

in improvised conservatories, or he is good for nothing. Any guardsman properly organised, and with a decent regard for his own position, or the feelings of others, must be always ready to make up a party whose mission it is to discuss white-bait and flirtation at Greenwich, or to inhale sentiment and perfume on the graceful terraces of refined Richmond. He will not be considered to have completed the measure of social perfection unless he can whip a team of four in style; and if he desires to insure universal approbation, it is above all things expedient that he shall keep a yacht.

'In these days,' says Mrs. Maynechance, 'young men make such a show on nothing, that it is almost impossible to be sure who has something.'

The possession of a yacht, however, and a good supply of servants, and a decent equipage, constitute material guarantees which even Mrs. Maynechance is disposed to accept as highly satisfactory; and if the guardsman satisfies all these requirements, he is quite certain to be a marked man. Not merely will he be idolized by daughters, he will be hunted down by mammas. His escort to fêtes, flower-shows, and what not else, will be in endless request. He can muse with satisfaction over the knowledge that the feminine heartburnings and jealousies which he excites are endless. If he is cynical enough to enjoy the spectacle of the torture which feminine suspense inflicts, he can play off this dowager against that, and can raise the ambitions of that miss only to fire the rivalry of this. Finally, he may disappoint an expectant world by taking flight one fine morning to Norway, when scheming parents are hottest on his traces, and may subsequently arouse all the fierce passions of vindictiveness which the breast of woman knows—and they are neither feeble nor few—by next showing himself in the saloons at Baden as the esquire of the notorious Russian operatic songstress Madlle. —. But the next season comes: his pécadilloes have passed away; his

escapades are forgotten and forgiven; the popular game called 'hunting the rich guardsman' recommences, and the sport is as keen as ever. 'So fares the soldier and so wags the world.'

Not that we wish it to be supposed that to be a guardsman it is at all necessary to be a Croesus: or that opulence is an indispensable requisite for the guardsman's popularity. There is probably no class of men in England who can, on an emergency, make impecuniosity wear so attractive a countenance as the members of this gallant regiment. For instance, it is generally known that Reginald Lacqueacre has not a penny wherewith to bless himself—that he has neither funds in the present nor expectations in the future. Still it is a fact that he finds his path in life strewn with roses, and that whatever his hand attempts to do, lo and behold it prospers. How does he manage it all? Some persons say it is his admirable waltzing which does it all; others are of opinion that our friend Reginald has discovered the secret of success in perpetually steering clear of indulgence in fermenting fluids—keeping his head in a chronic state of translucent clearness, and in being an infallibly dead shot at covert. If you ask Ensign Splinter—who is uncommonly jealous, by-the-by, of Mr. Lacqueacre's riding—he will tell you that Topbar pays him a regular salary to ride his horses, and that as for the residue of his income, the less said about that the better. However this may be, Reginald's career is successful. He has a most wonderful knack of conciliating diplomatic mammas, and he is allowed the run of their drawing-rooms, and the unshaded sunshine of their daughters. But then Reginald is such a useful fellow. Somehow or other, if you want a card for any unusually select assemblage, you have but to mention your requirements to this gallant officer, and the chances are, that within twenty-four hours it is duly deposited with your hall porter. There are rumours, indeed, going to the effect that old Bullion receives a hint from

Mrs. B. never to bother Mr. Lacqueacre for the repayment of the little sums which are periodically paid by that convenient capitalist to Reginald's credit at his banker's, in consideration of the countless services which he (Mr. Lacqueacre) is able and willing to perform for the substantial house of Bullion. But these rumours are, of course, calumnies, though, for the matter of that, Reginald Lacqueacre will assure you that it is emphatically necessary to live. And so this gilded butterfly—a type of a not inconsiderable class—flutters through existence, flitting from one saloon to another, gathering a sweet here and a favour there. Yes, decidedly, guardsmen are a very ornamental order of beings: who, after the sketch which we have given of their salient functions, shall deny them the additional credit of utility?

Well may we ask—What would society do without its guardsmen? Where would be so many of the episodes which each recurring season brings? Where would be the standing dishes at our entertainments, the figure-heads of our feasts, the centrepieces of our garden parties? To sweep the genus guardsman off the face of the earth would have much the same effect as to rob our dinner-tables of their floral decorations, our social queens and princesses of their perfumes and their powder. We have purposely not dwelt upon the ideal guardsman of the boarding-school miss, and have only touched in the lightest manner on the guardsman of muscular fiction. The gallant fellow requires no meretricious ornament of this description to make his social value felt. We have said quite enough to indicate his uses

and position in our social economy if we look at him simply as he is, if we contemplate him in his plain unvarnished condition. As such, and as nothing more, we have seen him: we knew what he is worth, and for what he is worth we take him. He furnishes a kind of connecting link between two worlds—the world of the club, on the one hand, and that of the drawing-room on the other. It is because he is so well acquainted with the former that he is so warmly welcomed in the latter: it is because he is so profoundly versed in the rude gossip of men that he is hailed as such a godsend by circles of refined women. He is a sort of Mercury, perpetually occupied with conveying messages of scandal and tittle-tattle from the club smoking-room to the perfumed saloon. Knowing everybody, everybody is glad to know him. 'Peace has its victories as well as war,' and the guardsman at home, when the thunders of war are silent, is quite as busily occupied in his own particular way as his brother who is engaged in campaigning abroad. The one has to uphold the honour of his country in the land of a foreign foe, the other has to vindicate his own reputation in his native metropolis as a man of fashion and society. The two careers are, indeed, distinct; but the toils which they each respectively imply are nearly equally arduous. It is the officer in an average line regiment who returns thanks on the occasion of any public festivity for the army: it is the guardsman who is the chosen representative of the ladies: and this fact is the significant symbol of a great many others.



WANTED—A PEABODY FOR THE PECUNIOUS CLASSES.

NEXT to being a rich man, in these days, it is best to be a poor man—that is an avowedly poor man, with no mistake about the matter. In that case you have nothing to do but to go quietly about your business, take everything that people offer to give you, and have your condition ameliorated at your leisure by philanthropic schemes. It must be a happy life: surrounded by friends; with statesmen ventilating your grievances in the senate, and journalists writing up your wrongs in the press; pleasant noblemen taking a personal interest in you; hundreds of persons dependent, for the positions they hold, upon their willingness to do you good; and above all—and this is itself an inestimable blessing—with no appearances to keep up!

A duke in distress—and such things are—is an object of pity, because nobody knows what to do with him. His friends can lend him a little money—a drop in the ocean of his requirements—but he has no sympathising public to help him. Indeed the public are dead against him. Philanthropists dare not deplore his misfortune; the press bullies him right and left. His title may get him the directorship of a company or two, with the fee of a couple of guineas for attendance at Board meetings; or, if not married already, he may utilize his title by an alliance with a female soapboiler. But failing some of these resources, he can never become the poor man whom everybody is willing to help. It is a sad case. Still there is some consolation in his exalted rank. A duke's a duke for all that—and a sense of this fact must be a solace to him in the darkest moments of affliction.

The distressed duke is, after all, not such an object of pity as the man with a mediocre income who wants a little more than he has, and wants a little more every year as he sees his expenses increase, and the prices of everything steadily rising, through the preposterous state of prosperity

at which the country has arrived. The fact is that people of the kind—having but a few hundred a year at the best, and no prospect of a sudden accession of fortune, are daily finding it more difficult to live. For this class there is no Peabody; and the direction given to so large a portion of that great benefactor's bounty for the benefit of the poor, suggests one of the principal wants of those of moderate means.

Like everybody else they must have a place of residence as a first necessity, and places of residence for persons who must be in London every day are becoming more costly every year. In town itself, comfortable accommodation is arriving at prohibitive prices. You may go into shabby little streets and get houses at comparatively small cost; but even these are always being turned into shops, or pulled down and improved off the face of creation. In thoroughfares of social repute parts of houses alone cost more than people of moderate resources can manage to pay; and the consequence is that the suburbs become a necessary alternative. I have not a word to say against the suburbs, where a pleasant little house is a welcome refuge from the dust of the town. But suburban houses are also rising in price; their rents are far higher than they were a few years ago; and they are spreading to such an extent as to become distressingly distant. Truly, you may live on a line of railway, and save a great deal in point of time; and for a short distance the railway gives an agreeable mode of locomotion. But everybody cannot live near the station, and the convenient houses increase yearly in value; so people are driven to long distances, which are especially vexatious to those who have to traverse them daily. There are—I scarcely dare venture to say how many—hundreds of clerks and others with rigorous office engagements every morning of their lives, the few holidays excepted, who live on lines of

railway involving an hour's journey each way. What a waste of life it seems—spending two hours out of the twenty-four in a railway carriage! It becomes a habit, and this is perhaps the worst condition of all; for a habit of the kind reduces man to a machine and sinks his individuality sadly. Some men like it for a time, or do not 'mind' it at any rate. They are content to rise before the rest of the family, to take a hurried breakfast *solus*, to seize a hurried hat and a contingent pair of gloves, and take a ten minutes' walk to the station—not without an anxious consultation with a watch on the way—to 'catch the train.' What happens when they miss the train—as they must occasionally do, for watches are not infallible, and even office men sleep later on some mornings than others—I do not pretend to say; but you may be sure that the delay is to their disadvantage, whether they be in public or private employ. In public offices a line is drawn across the signature book in the hall, when the clock strikes the hour when the *employés* are due, and an accumulation of entries on the wrong side of the line entails certain penalties. So great is the anxiety to avoid these, that several instances are known of men who have fallen dead on their arrival, through the excitement caused by their exertions to save their credit. The exactitude of this requirement seems rather absurd when we know that, in public offices at any rate, things are taken rather leisurely after arrival, and that—although hard-working officials abound—a 'bad bargain' of the government need do very little more than please him, and may generally keep out of hot water so that he manages to sign the book above the black line.

Supposing the morning traveller to have caught the train. There is the old familiar ticket-office, but he has not to wait to pay, having his annual ticket in his pocket, which he is seldom asked to produce. He has a minute or two to wait, perhaps, which he employs in purchasing a newspaper, or reading the everlasting advertisements on the

walls. There is the picture of that beautiful young lady with the long and abundant hair, which—for some inscrutable reasons, considering her tender years—she is 'restoring' with Mrs. Somebody's regenerator, declared to be the only efficient preparation. There is the picture of the wedding breakfast, with the bridegroom looking unutterable things at the bride as she is digging the knife into the cake; the bride's mother looking rather flushed, through premature festivity; the awful cad of a guest who is taking (apparently too much) champagne with somebody across the table, the small children, dressed up to the nines, who are accommodated apart; and the ultra-respectable butler who is congenially engaged in opening a fresh bottle. There, too, is our friend, the young lady with the impossible seat upon horseback and her habit playing pleasantly among the animals' legs. And there, in addition, are the three advertisements of the three daily papers, putting forth such varying recommendations. One announces 'The largest circulation in the world;' another 'The largest daily paper in the world;' and the third 'The best morning paper:'—the last implies a quiet rebuke to the others, and suggests the idea of journalism in a clean pinafore.

The train arrives; the guard good mornings our traveller, as he has done every morning, holidays excepted, for years past; our traveller good mornings the guard under the same novel condition; and the latter is shown into his customary compartment, containing seven other gentlemen who are his daily companions upon the line. There is an exchange of 'good mornings' all round, varied by such expressions as 'Sir, to you,' on the part of gentlemen who have tired of the formal mode of salutation. Each has his favourite journal in hand, which he looks at mostly and reads from at occasional intervals; there is a little talk, some smoking, and a great deal of staring at nothing; unless some especial event is astir, and the matter, public or private as it may be, furnishes food for exceptional

conversation. As a rule the journeys are dull, dull—and everybody is delighted when the opportunity is afforded them of getting out before the train stops at the platform.

The return journey is made, perhaps, under more cheerful conditions. The travellers have got through their day's work, sometimes through their dinners, always through their lunches, and usually through their preliminary Angustora and Sherry at the station. They are returning to home and rest, and are more lively over their evening than their morning papers. In the ordinary course of things they are landed at their destinations—to perform the same journeys to and fro next day, and for who shall say how many days to come!

The monotony and waste of time caused by living at so long a distance from town makes many men chafe; but, as they say, what else are they to do? It is of course pleasant to get into fresh air and thoroughly change the scene upon arrival at home—pleasant to be welcomed and renew associations. And the evening may be turned to very enjoyable account—unless the head of the family happens to be tired out and sleeps the greater part of it away after dinner. But the sacrifice of a couple of hours a day is a sacrifice indeed; and even people for whom one half the time will suffice are apt to get impatient when the railway is the inevitable mode of transit. They have the same imposed punctuality, the same methodical apportionment of their time to undergo, and the same exclusion from the chance of change. In town they would be able to vary their life and make up some little amusement for an evening or two in the week. On some lines, to be sure, there are late trains which run after the theatres; but the long journey throws a damp upon festivity, and the necessity for timing one's movements is a check upon enjoyment of which the chief charm is carelessness.

Living upon a line of railway of course involves extra expense, which must be considered an item in the cost of your establishment. But

even with this addition it is cheaper than living in town, if appearance and comfort be necessary considerations. The question naturally arises—Why should accommodation in London be so expensive? That house-rent in the best streets should become more costly is a necessary consequence of the increased demand caused by a growing population and the multiplication of people who seem to be making large fortunes. Land is especially precious, and nothing, I believe, pays better than building. But surely the plan of subdividing houses might be tried upon a larger scale than it has been. We all thought when the flats in Victoria Street were established, that we were entering upon a new *régime* of domestic comfort and economy. But the experience of Victoria Street involves a curious anomaly. In the first place the flats would not let—that is to say people would not take them—and the original speculator I believe was ruined. The street is even now not finished, and the projection of fresh buildings upon the same plan progresses slowly. But on the other hand we find that not only do the existing flats let, but they let at rents far beyond those originally contemplated, and are rising with every fresh lease. A flat on the first floor (above the *entresol*) costs as much as a mansion; one on the fourth floor as much as a good house. It is clearly useless to go to Victoria Street for the sake of economy; and, as a matter of choice, many persons would consider the expenditure better invested in the old manner. A flat is a very good substitute for a house, but it is not quite your castle, and there is still a prejudice in favour of castles among our countrymen. Large classes of Londoners, however, would take kindly to flats if they could be obtained at moderate rates, and the provision of some such accommodation would be a good work for some benevolent Peabody whom I should be glad to find in the future—as little distance in the future as possible, for time is precious and wants will not wait. Whether the associated dwellings

for workmen which have sprung from the munificence of the great American merchant will prove acceptable, is still a question; but there is no question that a system of the kind, applied to the requirements of people with moderate means, would become popular. The Belgrave and Grosvenor mansions promised to supply this want, to the extent of their limits, and it was said that the class of persons who inhabited the houses demolished to make way for them, would be enabled to take up their quarters in these palatial residences. But the idea was a delusion. Accommodation in the Belgrave and Grosvenor mansions is more costly even than in Victoria Street; and the rent of

a single room is, in many cases, as large as that of a moderately-sized house elsewhere. The arrangements, moreover—especially those connected with a restaurant from which the residents are supplied—are of a kind utterly opposed to individual independence; and the mode of living involved is very much like that of an hotel—with the difference that no hotel in London could possibly cost so much. For the sake of so many among us who are being driven to dwell out of town it is to be hoped that the flat system will be tried upon a more modest and moderate scale: of its success there need be no doubt, for the want is wide and well known.



GOING DOWN TO THE BOAT.

(ILLUSTRATED BY J. D. WATSON.)

THEY are going down to the boat,
 Father and mother and child,
 Though the evening breeze is rising,
 And the sunset skies are wild.
 He sails for the fishing grounds,
 Far beyond their darkling glance;
 The fisherman seeks the rocks he knows
 That front the north coast of France.

Though the seas and skies are angry,
 He's too busy to think of his life;
 This is the daily good fight he fights
 For the home and the child and the wife.
 She will lead his child down to the shore,
 She will carry his nets and his can,
 She will kiss, tremble, watch, and will pray
 For the safety of her good man.

The child has a seaweed lithe
 That has hung from the cottage roof;
 The seaweed has a charm, they say,
 And the mother will bring it to proof.
 For restored to the moist sea air
 It will quiver and tell its tale—
 Whether the night shall be still,
 Or whether it scents the gale.

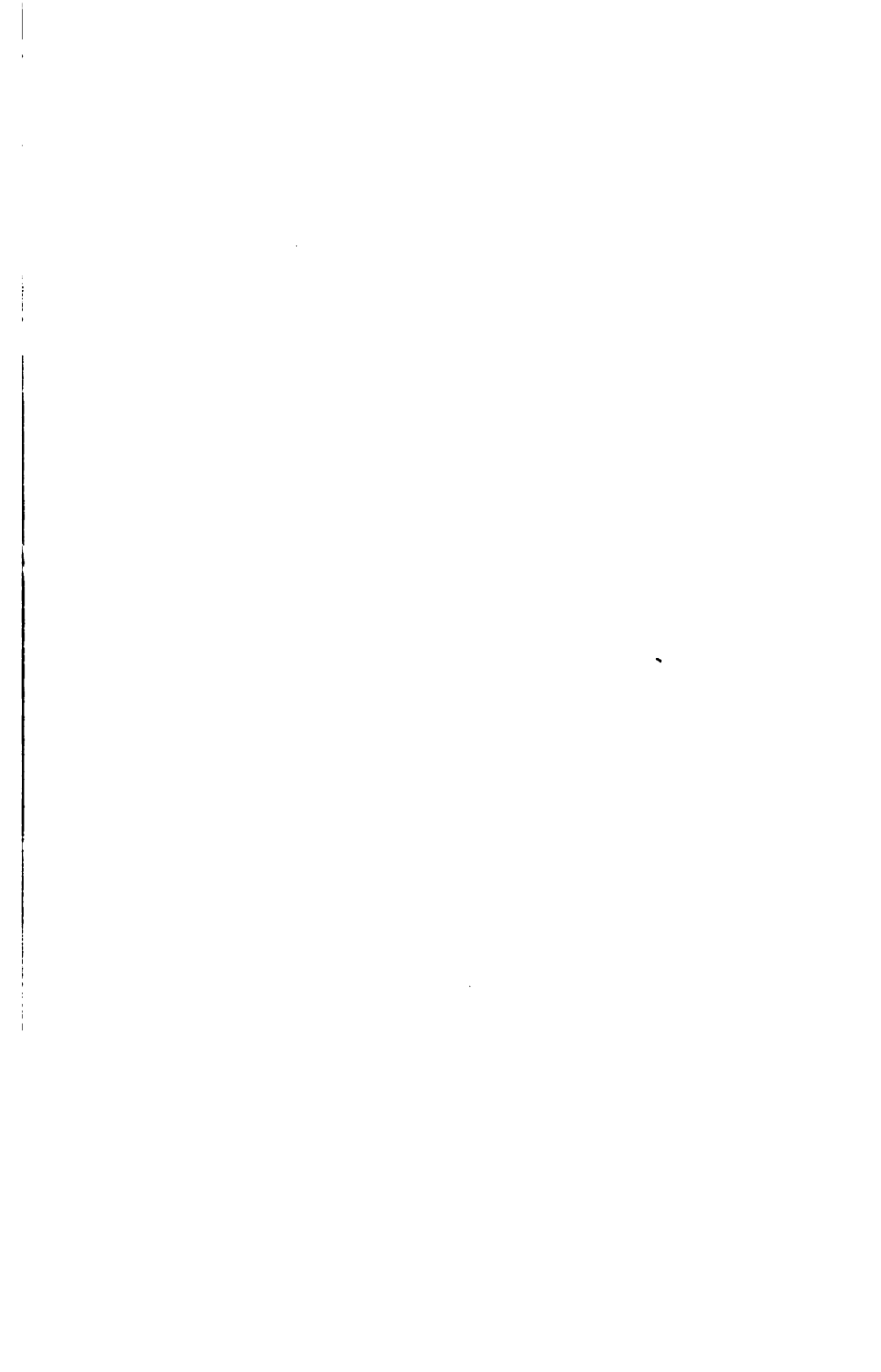
So the babe waves the weed in the air,
 If the sign is propitious they smile,
 If it threatens a storm they will disbelieve,
 Although they believe the while.
 But be the night still or stormy,
 To catch fish he means to try,
 The bread to win, the rent to pay,
 And the wife has much to buy.

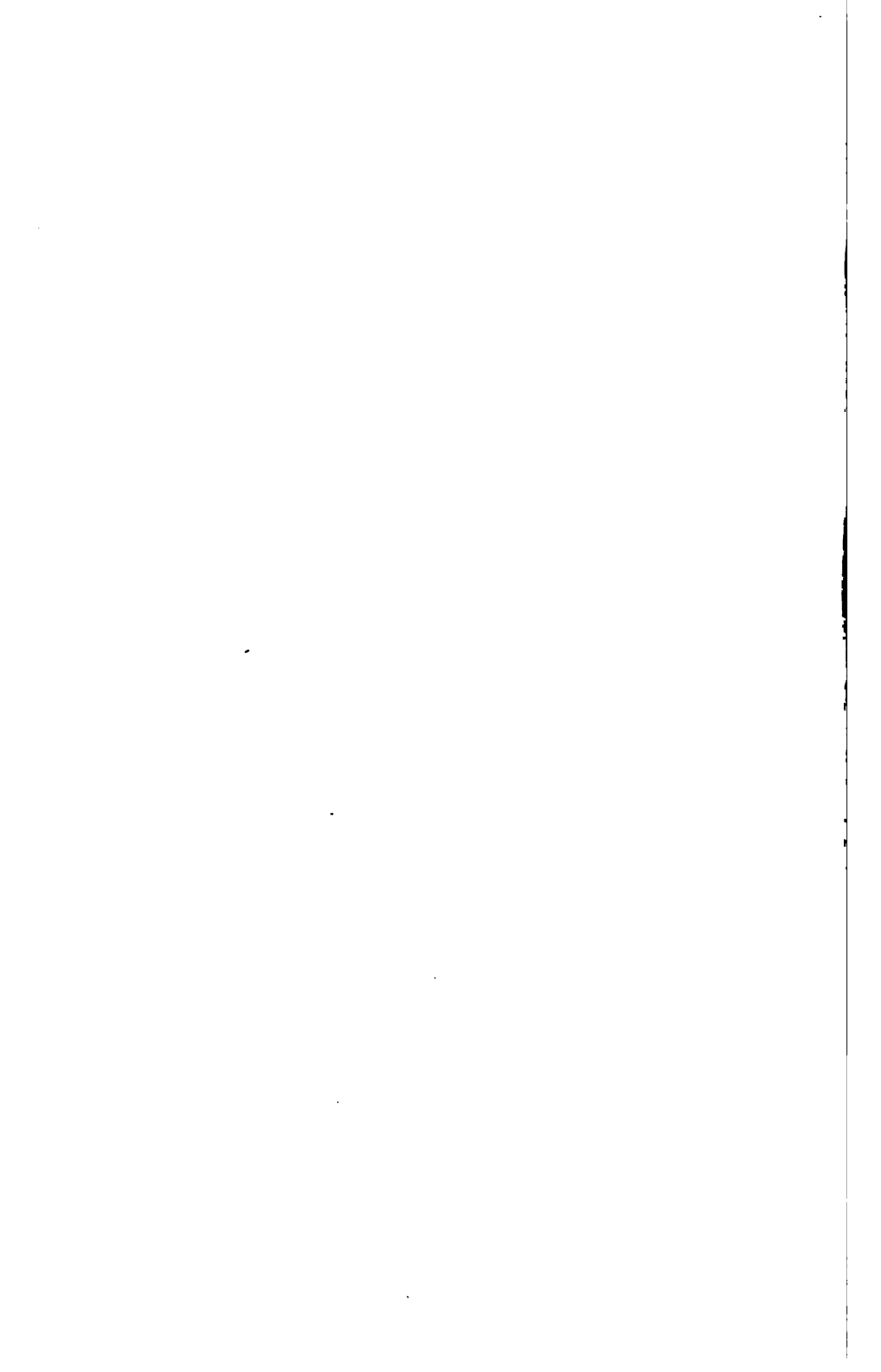


Illustrated by J. D. Watson.

GOING DOWN TO THE BOAT.

[See Our Page]





An untaught sailor is he,
But somehow in his true soul
He feels the mystery of the winds,
And the solemn starry pole;
And he thinks of heaven a little,
And much he thinks of home;
And the wife and the boy in his cot
Smile to him across the foam.

When shiningly, heavily rise the nets
His heart has a sober glee,
Even as those who of old drew nets
In the deep mere of Galilee.
And the loving, toiling man
May feel One ward doth keep
To bring him to the wished-for bourne,
And watch him through the deep.

For two nights and a day he's gone,
Whate'er wind and weather may be,
He has health and freedom, and earns his bread
On the vast wandering sea.
God willing, he'll pile up his fish
Not later than the third morn,
And mother and boy on the beach
Will meet him again at the dawn.

F. A.



DISSOLVING VIEWS.

(ILLUSTRATED BY HORACE STANTON.)

SCENES that are brightest, the song in the play says,
 Fleetest and first are to go;
 Sadly we sigh for the fancies and faces,
 Past like a lord mayor's show.

Still the faint echoes of childhood are calling.
 Pleasures no longer to be;
 Dead as the leaves that keep falling and falling
 Round the old roots of the tree.

Ah! the time seems to me ages on ages
 Since I was chubby and small;
 Turning life's wonderful picture-book pages,
 Now near the last page of all.

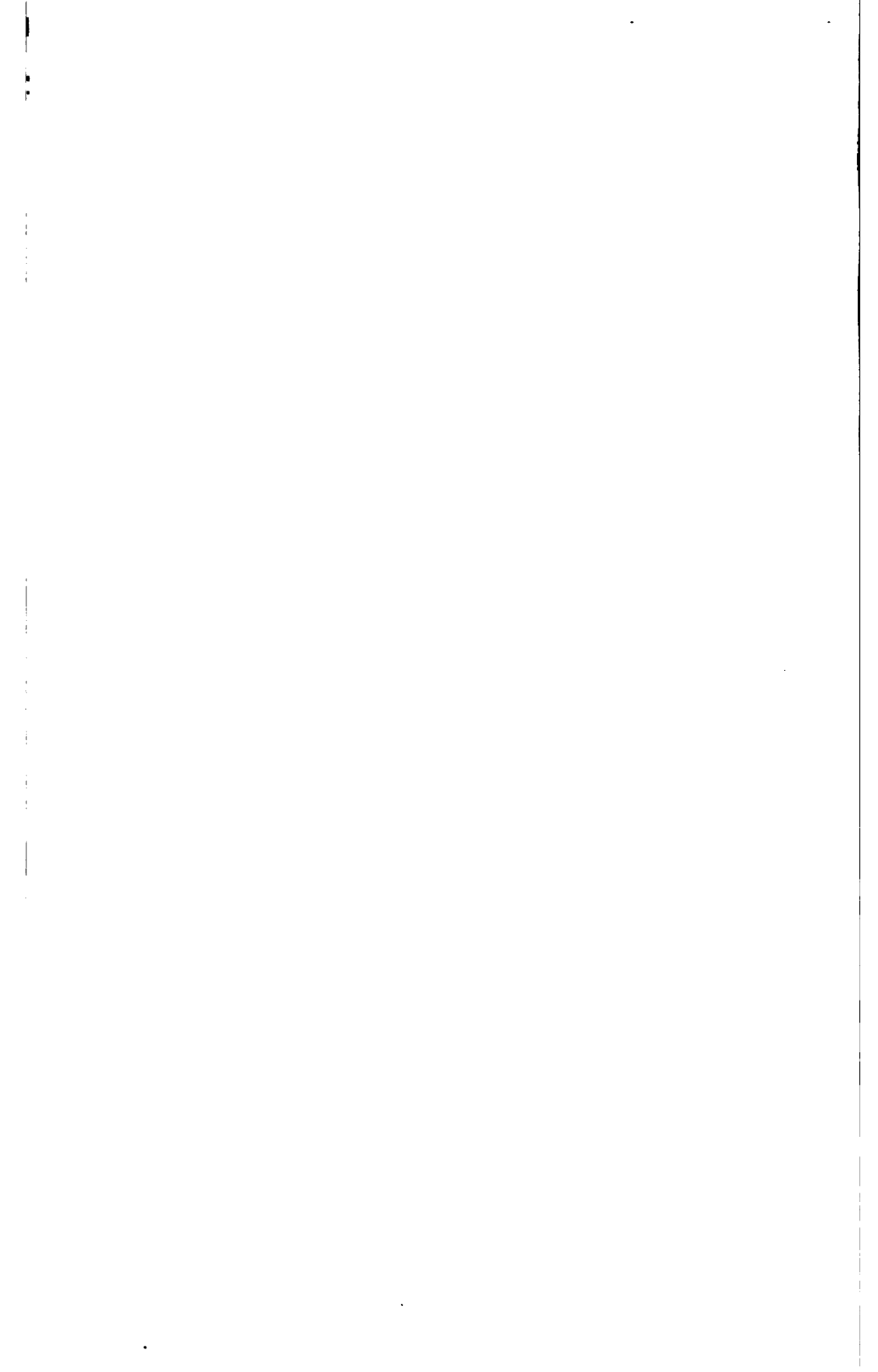
When shall my soul drink again at your fountains,
 Beauty, Affection, and Truth?
 When the swift river runs back to the mountains—
 When you restore me my youth.

Where are my friends of the playground and schoolroom,
 Comrades in short corduroys?
 Sometimes I meet one or two in a full room,
 Bald-headed, snuff-taking boys.

Where are the objects of early devotion,
 Beautiful beings of eight?
 Married perhaps: but I have not a notion
 As to their conjugal state.

Mid his grey embers young Love lies a-dreaming
 How with old Time he may range.
 Nothing is left us but shadows and seeming—
 Nothing is constant but change.

GODFREY TURNER.





Drawn by Herbert Stanton.

DISSOLVING VIEWS.

[See the Vision.]

HOW I WENT TO THE BAR—AND AFTER.

I WAS intended for the profession from the first—or rather I intended myself, and nobody opposed my inclinations. It was one indeed that, except upon special grounds, parents and guardians are not likely to disapprove.

Professions run in families, or families run in professions—which is the way to put it? No near relative of mine had ever been in the public service; and not having myself any thirst for glory, the idea of entering the army or the navy never occurred to me. It is true that after leaving the University of Cambrisis I joined the militia, and as a subaltern officer mastered the art of war, as practised by Her Majesty's land forces, to a respectable extent. But I had no thought of entering the army as a profession—which was fortunate, as I had by this time passed the prescribed limit as to age. The same objection as regarded the navy applied at an even earlier date, so that I had as little chance of becoming a Nelson as a Wellington. For the church I had no call, and, what was more practically important, there was no living in the family nor any interest to obtain one. Nor had my people any ideas in other directions; so nothing could be more natural than their accordance with my bias for the bar.

Apart from the probabilities of practice, a barrister-at-law of five years' standing is qualified for several important positions; and a barrister-at-law of seven years' standing may, I believe, become anything in civil life short of an angel. Nothing could be more encouraging than a knowledge of these facts. A French soldier is said to carry a marshal's baton in his knapsack; but those who are aware how the bulk of promotion goes in the French army, know that dictum to be a delusion, even considered in its proper light as a figure of speech. But nobody can deny that the British barrister has the great seal in his blue bag. He is always on the cards to become Lord Chan-

cellor: the rest depends upon the hands he holds—with especial reference to court cards and trumps—and in some degree to how he plays the game. It was with a full appreciation of these facts that I entered myself as a student at an Inn of Court.

Facetious people talk about 'eating your way' to the bar; but there is something more to be done than that. In the first place you must get a couple of barristers to recommend you as a fit and proper person to enter the profession; and you must sign a paper giving a full account of yourself, and disavowing connection with incompatible pursuits. After this, if you are not a university man, you have to pass an examination—principally in Latin and History—and deposit a hundred pounds in addition to the charges on entrance, which amount to something under forty pounds. A university man has only to pay the latter sum down, but he gains no pecuniary advantage beyond the interest of the further sum; for he has to pay seventy-five pounds for his call, besides his commons and incidental expenses, which the hundred pounds will always cover—a small balance sometimes remaining to the depositor. It is necessary, by the way, to get somebody to become security for your commons, arrears in the payment of which are among the worst trials of the treasurer. The university man gets an advantage over the non-university man in being required to dine only three instead of six days in hall each term. This is a convenience for those who are still at the university and have to run up to town for the purpose; but as a general rule this requirement sits lightly on the students, some of whom dine determinedly every day as long as the terms endure.

Nothing more is now demanded of the student so far as 'keeping terms' is concerned; but if he intends to be called after the three years, he must take one of three courses which are open to him. He-

may attend a year's public and private lectures, given by the readers of the Inns of Court; he may enter the office of a conveyancer or special pleader, giving a certificate of attendance for a twelvemonth; or he may pass a legal examination.

I have not found that the majority of students make their election immediately. There is plenty of time, they consider, and meanwhile they will make sure of their terms.

The new student—whatever his age, and that may vary considerably—feels very young when he goes to dine in hall for the first time. The man at the entry asks his name before taking the responsibility of putting him on a gown; the under-treasurer, or steward, patronises him—at least he thinks so—when instructing him where to sign the said name for the purpose of putting his attendance upon record. But he shakes down instinctively among the men who are equally strange with himself, reads all the notices on the screens, including the names of the candidates for calls, and ventures presently, supported by two or three of his fellow juniors, to explore the upper end of the hall.

And here a word of the hall itself. It is a noble interior, dating several centuries back, with a grand groined roof and a screen of especial beauty. Very cheerful look the bright oak walls, with the arms emblazoned on the panels, and the portraits of illustrious men of the past, members of the inn—amongst whom Lord Bacon holds a conspicuous place. They were great times for the hon. society when the great Lord Chancellor was on the roll of its living members—you may still see his signature in the books—and Queen Elizabeth was one of its best friends. The tables upon which the dinner is being served—they are most of them arrayed in pleasant white, but a few are uncovered, and in all the glory of their thick polished oak—are said to have been a present from the Virgin Queen, who caused them to be made from wood which had composed part of the Spanish Armada. It is

added by tradition that the royal lady has more than once had a seat in the gallery behind the screen—notably to see a performance by the students of the inn of a new sensation drama of the period called 'Midsummer Night's Dream.'

While these, and sundry other particulars are being imparted by an old member to the little gathering of new students, a dozen or two of more or less elderly gentlemen, who have arrived by another entrance, are shaking hands with other gentlemen who are preparing to take their places at the upper tables. The former are the benchers, who are thus disporting themselves in the body of the hall while the dinner is being served. One student knows one of the benchers—a friend of his father's, and through whom he has been induced to select this particular inn as the starting place of his profession—(of course he will not always belong to it, as judges have an inn to themselves). But he does not see his particular bencher; and standing confessed as a student by the fashion of his gown, he is an object of so little importance that nobody thinks it worth while to take the smallest notice of him. One student, by the way, is talking and laughing with a bencher in a most intimate manner, but he is a man with grey hair. He has been a solicitor it seems, and having been particularly useful to his party in an electioneering way, has been promised a handsome appointment if he will qualify by going over to the bar. He is qualifying accordingly, and it is understood that the masters of the bench will let him through upon easy terms. Another student who seems going into the profession rather late in the day, is a fine, tall, military-looking man. He is, in fact, a major in the Indian staff corps, holding the position of cantonment magistrate in the Bengal presidency. He is home on furlough, and takes advantage of the time to get made a barrister-at-law, in order to increase his importance, and help him to get the post of judge advocate general. To men in his kind of position, returning

to their appointments, the Inns of Court make a concession to the extent of four terms. Another mature student is a member of the Indian civil service. He is already a judge, but considers that the legal degree at home will be of use to him. There are some natives of India who are also keeping their terms; and they expect to get very good practice on their return, as they probably will. They already speak English almost as well as any in the hall. Two or three colonial officials—who have also come here to gain their private ends—complete the exceptional list. The remainder of the students are student-like to a fault.

A mysterious functionary bearing a mace, having entered the hall and taken up his position near the cross-table, three loud knocks are given by somebody as a signal for everybody to take their places; and then the chaplain gives out the Latin grace. So benchers betake themselves to their elevated position—where they get a very different kind of dinner from that served in the body of the hall; and the barristers and students, having already sorted themselves more or less according to seniority, also take their seats. There is a rapid removal of covers, and the 'commons' stand revealed.

It is rather an abrupt beginning. The diners have to plunge at once *in medias* beef; that is to say, our new student and the three others who form the immediate mess—a mess consisting of four persons, two on each side of the table, facing one another. To each of these divisions a separate dinner is supplied, of which the party are exclusive proprietors. A handsome sirloin falls to their lot—the mess above having a saddle of mutton and the mess below a leg. There are varied vegetables besides, placed in a compartmented dish, and the course also includes Yorkshire pudding, everything being well served and apparently very good.

'Rather severe feeding this,' says one of the new students. It was his first dinner in hall, and he evidently wishes to convey the im-

pression that he was in the habit of dining with Lucullus.

The captain of the mess—that is to say the gentleman sitting first in point of seniority—counting one, two, across the table, and three, four, back again—explains that the upper tables are supplied with soup or fish. 'We are better off,' he adds, 'than the mess below; they have suet pudding with their mutton.'

'Suet pudding!' says the friend of Lucullus, with an astonished air; 'I have had it at school, but I never ate suet pudding as a free agent.'

The sirloin is 'with' the captain. That is to say, the captain is expected to help himself first; the next proceeding (as he explains to his three companions, who, it seems, are all present for the first time,) being to push the dish over to his *vis-à-vis*, who, having helped *himself* in turn, is expected to push it diagonally to the third member of the mess on the opposite side, who, after the necessary interview with the sirloin, pushes it across to the fourth man of the mess, who faces him. There are severe fines, it is understood, if these formalities are neglected.

But the captain, it is observed, pushes the dish to his opposite neighbour without participating in its contents.

'Don't you like beef?' asks the youngest and most ingenuous member of the mess.

'When I happen to want it,' returns the captain, somewhat coldly, and with an evident sense of his comparative dignity; though substantially it does not amount to much, for his 'standing' extends over only four terms, and two years more must pass before he can be called. 'I have a dinner engagement elsewhere,' he added, 'and have come down to-night only to make sure of the term.'

The rules of the Inns of Court are arbitrary in many respects; but it seems that the benchers, though they may bring down a student to the dinner, have no means of making him eat. The friend of Lucullus looks a little put down by

the announcement. He had wondered just before why the captain wore a white choker, and appeared otherwise in the war-paint of society; but he and the other two men, having no reason to take an equally lofty view of the occasion, proceed to do their best with the fare before them.

In the meantime the butler has made his usual application—addressed of course to the captain—‘What wine, sir?’

‘Sherry,’ replies the captain with decision; adding, after the butler has gone, ‘I suppose none of you take port at dinner? and I don’t mind a glass of sherry myself.’

Everybody acquiesces in the arrangement, and then the captain adds: ‘I suppose you know that there is only one bottle of wine allowed to each of these lower messes; but you may all have as much more as you please after dinner, by paying for it; and, in fact, every new man is expected to stand a bottle to the mess on his first night, so you’ve plenty before you if you all do that.’

The butler, upon being questioned, certifies to the Mede and Persian nature of this convivial arrangement; but to prevent scandalous consequences it is agreed that the extra wine shall be supplied as far as required by rotation of seniority, any remainder being reserved for the next dinner in hall. In the meantime beer, light and bitter, is supplied to any extent to all who want it—and our students, it appears, want it considerably.

The airloin—looking rather foolish by this time, notwithstanding the forbearance of the captain—is being removed and the table cleared for the next course, when a voice is heard from the mess immediately above—it is that of its captain:—

‘Gentlemen of the lower mess—Mr. Featherstone, Mr. —,’ and then comes a series of mumblings, the names of the new members not being known.

The gentlemen of the upper mess each holds a replenished glass of wine, so their intention is evident. The eight gentlemen bow to each other in fours.

‘Now let us polish off the lower mess,’ says the captain of that containing the three new men, adding a few drops to his glass of sherry. He is in the same difficulty regarding names as the captain of the mess above; but he manages to get the cognomen of the captain, and the same ceremony is gone through upon fresh ground.

‘We are supposed to address everybody by name, for the sake of sociality,’ he explains, ‘but of course you can’t do it when men are new.’

I omitted to mention that the captain, whose duty it is to decant the wine at dinner, had been obliged by rule, before tasting his own glass, to see those of his fellows filled, and to bow all round before imbibing himself.

Even now the ceremonies are not over. The airloin is being succeeded by tarts, when the captain suggests, ‘Gentlemen, shall we drink the upper mess?’ So the upper mess is drunk in return, and the lower mess drinks in return to us about the time when cheese and salad makes its appearance. This is the last formality of the kind; and the wine, I may here mention, is passed, not round the mess, but backwards and forwards across the table, after the manner of the diables. I should not omit to mention that the bitter ale—of a quality not quite so good as Bass—may be had *à discrétion*.

Then comes a pause. The dinner is at an end in our neighbourhood, but the bench seems determined to ‘go on for ever;’ and until the bench has come to a conclusion and grace has been said it would be highly indecorous for anybody to leave. Mr. Featherstone, the gentleman with the engagement, looks at the clock under the gallery, and compares it with his own watch. Both agree that it is past seven, the dinner having taken more than an hour in discussion. Mr. Featherstone begins to chafe. How is he to get to Hyde Park Gardens by a quarter to eight if these people do not make haste? The benchers, whose last thought would be in reference to the engagements of gentlemen in the hall, at length show signs of departing to the

inner room in which they take their dessert. The principal sign is in the person of the cook, who comes to one corner of the upper table, clad in immaculate white, including, of course, his cap, to receive the verdict given upon his dinner. Standing submissively in the august presence, he hears himself commended or criticised as the case may be; after which he takes off a large glass of wine—in conspicuous profile from the point of view of the hall—and bows himself out.

There is no unnecessary delay after this solemnity. Three knocks upon the upper table announce the concluding grace; which said, the benchers retire, bowing with much courtesy to the standing occupants of the general tables, who are then free to do as they please.

A Snider bullet is a tardy projectile compared with Mr. Featherstone in his movement to the door. He disappears in an instant, having cast his gown, which remains on the floor where it fell.

The other three students finish the wine—having gained a slight advantage [in that respect by Mr. Featherstone's engagement, and conclude that they have come to an end of conviviality. But the butler coming round again asks if they take port. There is no more due, it seems, for commons, but more may always be had by paying for it. It is the custom, the butler adds, in confirmation of Mr. Featherstone's pint, for each gentleman, on first dining in hall, to give a bottle of wine to his mess.

'At that rate we shall be obliged to have three more,' suggests one of the students, rather alarmed at the prospect. However, it is decided that only one shall be ordered now, the other two being kept in reserve. There are not a few extra bottles ordered at the same time, towards the proper enjoyment of which the waiters place plates of wine biscuits down the table—which article of furniture, by the way, does much credit to Queen Elizabeth and the Spanish Armada, being rich and deep in colour, and polished to a miracle. One of the new men suggests that the biscuits shall be

devilled, and sends a message to the cook to that effect; but that functionary returns an answer that 'there is no precedent for compliance with such an order.' In the absence of legalization by statute, the cook is on his guard against opening the door to a demand for devilled biscuits on the ground of custom. You see there is legal sagacity in the very atmosphere of the place, extending even to the kitchen. I suppose the *chef* imbibes something of it with those large glasses of wine that he gets from the bench.

Our three friends content themselves with the second bottle of wine upon this occasion, and move off at about the same time as the occupants of the upper tables. But there are five gentlemen, occupying the last mess of all, who remain considerably longer. They have had two windfalls in the way of wine, in addition to their bottle at dinner. For the fifth or odd man counts as a mess by himself, and gets the full allowance, which he naturally merges into the resources of the next mess, which resources consist of yet another bottle given by a new student. The consequence is not only a more protracted sitting but an unusual amount of animation in the discourse; for the port, though undeniably admirable wine, is not so old as it will be in a few years time, and a little of it goes a great way, especially in the neighbourhood of the head. But the party separate pleasantly enough, after a playful interchange of their cast-off gowns, rolled up and adapted to pelting purposes. After this some go up to the library, where they are at liberty to read as hard as they please, and may be supplied, moreover, with coffee, while others prefer less professional diversions out of doors, and not unconnected, I suspect, with billiards.

Such are the probable incidents of an ordinary night in hall. Very few repetitions are required to make the new student completely at home, to give him familiarity with all the customs of the hall, and the stories connected with it which are carried down by oral tradition; to place

defects in the administration of the Hon. Society at his fingers' ends, and generally to qualify him for taking an improving tone in any conversation upon local topics that may arise.

But there are two nights in each term when the proceedings are of a more festive character. The first of these is 'Call Night,' and the second 'Grand Night.' The first is principally interesting to the junior tables; but barristers of all degrees of 'standing' are present, and take more or less part in the proceedings. The quality of the dinner is as usual, according to the day of the week on which the sixteenth day of term may happen to fall, but some extra wine is supplied in honour of the occasion, which is always one of rejoicing. It used to be the custom (I am speaking in this as in other respects, of one particular inn) for the men who were called to send in their own wine and entertain their friends; but now private parties to celebrate such occasions are held in chambers or elsewhere.

However, the called men, having gone through the necessary forms inside, are expected to dine in hall, where they appear in all the solemnity of evening dress, and when dinner is over their health is always proposed from the bench. It is the treasurer, I believe, who gives out the toast, which used to be accompanied by what reporters for the papers call 'a few neat and appropriate remarks.' But of late years, I have noticed, these have become more and more brief, and now they seem to have resolved them into the bare form—that the masters of the bench have much pleasure in drinking the health of the new barristers, and wish them success in their profession. The gentlemen concerned, who are standing in acknowledgment of the honour, bow their thanks and resume their seats. But after the august personages have retired, and the Queen has been duly toasted, the senior barrister present pays them a similar compliment on the part of the bar; and then it is that the newly-admitted members of the body have an opportunity of airing their eloquence. Some content them-

selves with a modest address, but others come prepared with magnificent orations, comparable only to the style of 'the late Mr. Burke,' or that of the young gentleman in Mr. Dickens's story who, on the question of the selection of a steamer for the water-party, moved an amendment that the word 'Fly' be substituted for 'Endeavour,' and took the opportunity of taking a comprehensive review of the condition of England from the earliest times, winding up with a dissertation upon picnics and constitutional rights.

There is a storm of applause as each gentleman sits down, developing into a hurricane at the students' tables, where the traditional undergraduate spirit prevails in full force. More toasts follow, including the health of the benchers, the senior barristers, and the students. The latter are jealous of their rights in this respect, and if the mark of respect be long delayed, a bold spirit among them will possibly rise and point out the omission in a humorously-satirical tone. The response is properly made by the junior student present, with varying effect, but frequently in such a manner as to convey the assurance that the speaker is not likely to find his prospects in life affected by any unnecessary diffidence.

All this is very cheering, and then come the songs. Everybody of course cannot sing, but this precaution is at any rate taken towards securing performers: every man who has been known to sing before is made to sing again, and if he has no new songs he is made to repeat the old. And it is hard if, among a succession of new comers, occasional additions are not made to the list, to serve as precedents for the future. In this manner, if nothing goes wrong, the proceedings pass off in considerable harmony.

'Grand Nights' are similar in most respects, the difference being that there is usually more singing and less speaking—for of course there are no 'called' men to honour. The dinner upon these occasions, I should not omit to mention, is upon an extra scale. The celebration of

the year, however, is the 'Great Grand Night'—the Grand Night in Trinity Term. The Hon. Society then entertains a number of distinguished guests: Lord Chancellors, present or past, Vice-Chancellors, judges, and so forth. The hall is specially decorated for the occasion, and the banquet is of a gorgeous character. The festivities are kept up in hall long after the benchers with the distinguished visitors have retired for their post-prandial entertainment to the inner chamber, and resolve themselves, as you may suppose, into their usual elements.

On all the Grand Nights—Little Grand, if they will allow me to call them so, as well as Great Grand—there are certain ceremonies observed at the inn referred to which are, I believe, peculiarly its own. One of these is the introduction of the 'loving cup' both before and after dinner. On the first occasion it goes round before the company have taken their places at the table, concurrently with platesful of toasted bread cut into small dice. The taking of one of these square pills is not a superstitious observance, as might be supposed, but is intended as a preparation for the palate previous to your interview with the cup. After dinner, I need scarcely say, such a preparation would be undreamed of by any person not far gone in facetiousness. Then we have a ceremony of a different kind. The company rise in pairs for the solemn imbibition, and take a fond embrace of the tankard by turns, dedicating their draught, as by prescription bound, 'To the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of Good Queen Bess.'

The contents of the cup are a delightful compound of several flavours, with a motive power of sherry; or rather—to adopt a less mixed and more musical metaphor—it is a fantasia upon the wine of Xerez, the original theme ruling the palate in the midst of the variations. If you ask the butler what it is you will be told that it is sack (he declines, by the way, to give you the receipt for making it), and it may, indeed, be the concoction which used to be called by that name.

There is reason, however, to suppose that 'sherris sack' simply meant 'sherry dry,' or *sec*, since there is an old English word, *sack*, which has the same meaning as the French. It has, however, been held that the name of 'sack' was given punningly to the pure wine after the sack of Cadiz by the Earl of Essex. If this be so we can account for Shakespeare using the term in the reign of Elizabeth; but whether Shakespeare can account for Falstaff using it in the reign of Henry IV. is another matter. Falstaff, by the way, does not speak of the refreshment as of a dry or light description:—'I will eschew thin potations and addict myself to sack.' It is likely enough, then, that we are imbibing Falstaff's sack when we drink to 'the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of Good Queen Bess.'

Many men, especially during their studentship, dine continually in hall during term, irrespective of the number of times enjoined by rule. As a measure of economy this is not imprudent, for you are made to pay for a certain number of dinners, whether you consume them or not; and if you neglect these or only attend to some of them, you will find five shillings added to your account each term for 'absent commons.' Nobody quite understands the various fancy methods of charging; and the consequence is that men are apt to look upon bills for commons as facetious documents which may be allowed to accumulate for any length of time. You may go to the farthest ends of the earth, and charges of some kind will be duly made against you. Mr. Robert Lowe, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, told the House of Commons that on his return from Australia he was made to pay a sum of—I think—40*l.* for dues on account of dinners or something of the kind, which had accumulated in his absence in Australia. The Inns of Court are certainly very hospitable; and it must be a great comfort to members at the antipodes—the knowledge that there is always a knife and fork for them in hall.

A considerable number of students attend lectures, besides those who intend to use them as a qualification for call. But the majority look upon them in the latter light, and do not consider themselves bound to listen with much attention. I here refer to the public lectures; at the private lectures there is more work done; and by attending all, taking notes, and working up the cases referred to, a man may find his legal education considerably advanced in the course of the year. There are always a proportion of men, however, who treat the teachings of the Reader with lofty indifference, and disport themselves during his prolixities in anything but a spirit of attention. These shirkers usually affect the lower end of the hall, where they are considerably out of sight. Here the notes taken are principally of a pictorial character, though they sometimes take an epistolary form. One man told me that he conducted his entire private correspondence while ostensibly engaged in saturating his mind with the principles, precedents, and practice of British law. 'My people at home,' he added, 'can't make out why I am such a good correspondent during one part of the year and such a bad correspondent during the rest of it; for I do very little in the way of letter writing when the educational term is over—as you may suppose.' Although very little is heard at this end of the hall there is plenty of verbal commentary—to the great disgust of the reader, who will occasionally come to a sudden stop, and request a little more order. This process is perhaps repeated three or four times in the course of a lecture. Woe be to the men who get marked for this kind of proceeding should they miss a lecture, and require a dispensation, which can be obtained from the Council only on the recommendation of the reader! That functionary, you may be sure will show no favour of the kind, so the unhappy defaulters lose a term, which they have to make up in the following year—a delay that may retard their call if they depend upon their lectures, and have left

them until late, as they frequently do. No mere accident, by the way, is accepted as an excuse for non-attendance at any particular lecture—nothing but positive inability, certified by a medical man.

My turn for call came after three years' punctual dining, and being by this time otherwise qualified I had no cause for further delay. So my name was screened in the halls of the four Inns of Court in compliance with regulation; and nobody questioning my claims as a fit and proper person, I found myself, on the sixteenth day of a certain Trinity term, now some years on the wrong side of time, prepared to take upon myself the honours of a Barrister-at-Law. Happily there was no further ordeal to encounter but a few formalities; and these I found involved no more trouble than going down to hall an hour or so before dinner, and waiting until summoned by the Masters of the Bench to their sacred chamber. So down I went accordingly, in the evening dress demanded by the occasion, a little too early, in order to be on the safe side, and joined my companions in becoming dignity, who were also duly dressed, and had come down a little too early, to be on the safe side also. However, the interval affords an excellent opportunity to settle accounts with the steward. There are commons to pay, of course, and there is an inevitable 75*l.* for the direct expense of the call. So, between commons and call, it is found that—supposing the commons have not been paid during the three years of studentship—the amount demanded will reach to something like 100*l.*, in addition, of course, to the sum of something like 40*l.* paid upon entrance as a member of the Inn. You can never calculate to a pound or two, for the charges for commons are, as I have said, capricious, and will sometimes involve a slight addition to the sum stated. But the demands, whatever they be, are all settled with that punctuality for which—as well as for the variety of nose and whisker—distinguished by Mr. Dickens—the bar of England is so justly celebrated.

After waiting for a long time we have not long to wait. The summons at last arrives—to the presence of the bench. So we march through the hall, and find ourselves in the presence of the bench in the undignified space of a couple of minutes. We have but a vague sense of the scene at first; but we are conscious of a large and rather luxurious oak-panelled apartment, with a long table occupying the centre, round which are seated a score or so of gentlemen—some old, some only elderly, some comparatively youthful, but all with an aspect of dignity and responsibility which makes them evidently kin and gives a solidarity to the body. We all instinctively bow on entering, and a movement in response, more or less marked, runs round the table, after which business is at once proceeded with. This business relates to the oaths of allegiance in reference to the Crown, and supremacy in reference to the Church in its relation to the Crown, which are prescribed by established rule. In the case, however, of a Roman Catholic, who is among our number, the latter test is dispensed with; a different form, if I remember rightly, being substituted. The oaths are read by the treasurer, the subscribers to them repeating the words after him. After this, the gentleman at the head of the table, addressing the candidates respectively by name, announces to them that the Hon. Society has much pleasure in calling them to the bar. Thereupon the nearest bencher holds out his hand to the nearest candidate, the next presents his, and finally we shake hands all round the table, receiving as we proceed congratulations and wishes for our success. Then comes more bowing, and out we all come. The ceremony used, I believe, to include a glass of wine; but this part of it has been abandoned of late years, in accordance with the sober spirit of the age.

We have entered the room in our students' gowns; at the threshold, as we emerge, stands an official who gravely removes these badges of probation, and places upon our

proud shoulders barristers' gowns in their stead. This investiture gives a practical stamp to the proceedings; we at once realise the change we have undergone—from the crawling chrysalis condition to the glory of wings, accompanied by the licence to fly; and we re-enter the hall feeling barristers-at-law every inch of us, and receive the congratulations of our friends with an elevation of moral tone calculated to produce an imposing effect upon our juniors. The latter, by the way, who have the ill-regulated minds common to persons of their inferior standing, express, in their free way, a jocular curiosity as to the nature of the tests to which we have been subjected in the inner chamber. Fresh in the sense of our new dignity, we will not, of course, reveal the very simple nature of our installation. So the dull men among us preserve a solemn reticence which is understood to mean a great deal, and conveys, indeed, considerably more than the fanciful hints thrown out by others of Chaldean mysteries and tests of (alleged) masonic character, in which the traditional gridiron and time-honoured red-hot poker play their accustomed part. After all, as we remark confidentially to one another, the profession is not a plaything, and students make a great mistake in regarding it from a facetious point of view and treating it as a mere debating society. Their boisterous conduct, too, we agree in thinking very improper; adding that it will not be our faults, if, for the future, a more decorous mode of proceeding is not enforced in the junior ranks.

We are rapidly, you see, becoming prigs, and—in the Bonn or Heidelberg sense of the term—Philistines. Never was greater change in men made in a quarter of an hour. Dinner is a little late—as it usually is on call nights—and, wandering about the hall in our new gowns, we survey things in general from an unaccustomed eminence. On the screen, as usual, are the lists of names for call at the four Inns of Court. They include our own, and the chances are that

by this time every man referred to has assumed the same position as ourselves. But for all that we glance over their names in a patronising way, and look with especial contempt upon the announcement of the subject for the next annual prize essay, open to all students of our Hon. Society who have not kept more than a certain number of terms. We glance, too, with an air of approving pity, upon the book in which students sign their names. We shall have to sign our names no more. We may dine in hall or not, just as we please; the Hon. Society can do nothing more for us; our next honours—silk, or possibly the coif—will be gained outside—in the great world of the profession.

One touch of dinner makes the whole world kin. The three knocks on the table come as usual; we find that it is possible to be hungry even after a call to the bar; and the little excitement of settling into our places reduces our Alnascharian visions to a practical aspect of things. During the meal—with all its outward forms and interior fun—our high moral tone comes down considerably; we forget our dignity, and abandon ourselves to pleasantries even with the students. The very circumstance, too, that we are the principal objects of attention in hall makes us feel somewhat small. Our new rank is not yet taken for granted; and when our health is drunk from the bench in the usual manner, with the wish for success in our profession, we feel ourselves novices once more, exposed to the indignity of patronage. But we rally somewhat after our parting bows to the bench, and in responding to the subsequent speech of the senior barrister muster up a comparative degree of independence. But few among us manage to make exactly the same speech that we had intended in return. Those who have prepared a conventional style of address, after the manner of 'the late Mr. Burke,' get on perhaps the best. The effort is one involving only recollection and rhetoric; and the prolusion may be generally wound off without much entangle-

ment. But some have determined upon more ambitious efforts. They desire to say clever things concerning themselves in connection with the society, and concerning the society in connection with the other societies, and to give a social and personal turn to their utterances. This is hazardous ground, as so much depends upon the ease and grace which they can bring to bear upon their own behalf, and their individual capacity for holding their audience. The consequence is an occasional break down, and bitter regrets on the part of the breakers-down that they have not been contented with 'the late Mr. Burke's' style of response. The difference involved is one which we have most of us felt—between going on, say, at an amateur theatrical performance, in a character dress and in our own private costume: the more your individuality is obtruded the less easy is your task. But there is one comfort attending the necessity for rising upon difficult occasions: you must, in the nature of things, sit down sooner or later; and whether you can or whether you can't speak, your address has an end as well as a beginning. It is as well to remember this profound fact while upon your legs—supposing that you feel diffident—for some speakers launch themselves upon a sea of oratorical troubles without any apparent notion of a port. They stem wave after wave, waiting for smooth water, lose their rudders, let their masts go by the board, become complete wrecks, and ultimately have to take to rhetorical rafts with the scantiest store of provisions, and go drifting about until cast upon a rock of helplessness, unless providentially picked up by some strange sail in the form of considerate applause.

The various phrases incidental to unaccustomed oratory are gone through upon the occasion in question; and the heroes of the failures are perhaps the greatest gainers by their experience. They have generally been the most ambitious of the speakers, have attempted to develop ideas instead of depending upon the 'fatal gift' of fluency, and

—unless really weak, and given up to an abject feeling of discouragement—are stronger than ever in their knowledge of the necessity for nerve and exertion. In public speaking as in other things the greatest successes are generally obtained under the greatest difficulties. In love, Byron said, with more truth than he probably intended, it is best to begin with a little aversion: in oratory we have a great example of what may be done with an impediment in speech. Demosthenes spoke to the surging waves with pebbles in his mouth: had he been a ready speaker of the 'neat and appropriate' kind he would have found no necessity for so stirring an audience. He would probably have been contented with the little he could do, and we should never have heard of his name in connection with eloquence.

But the troubles in hall are soon over. Thence we adjourn to chambers, where several of us have combined for a 'call party' coerced by no restraints, professional or otherwise. We have asked every man we have met for the past fortnight to assist—taking them as they came, barristers, students, and outsiders; and the collective gathering, allowing for a large number who do not turn up, is of a most imposing character. 'Call night' is identical in date at all the inns—the sixteenth day of term—and any number of men are afloat. The Temple is all alive; chambers in every direction are lit up with unaccustomed brilliancy; porters and policemen are running about, bent upon ministering errands; laundresses are going to and fro in a feminine state of flurry; and waiters from the neighbouring taverns are even more at home than usual in these hallowed precincts of the law. The Rainbow has been drawn upon extensively, also Dick's, also the Mitre, also the London; and Prosser's—albeit employed principally for lunches—has its share in the general activity. Our party, you may be sure, is not the least of the claimants upon these resources, which are drawn upon extensively on account of the large number of guests. From nine o'clock

onwards the visitors throng the staircase, and make such demands upon the door that the unhappy clerk and his assistants are at their wits' end to dispose even of the hats. But chambers are wonderfully accommodating in their reception of visitors, and ours seem to have the virtue in a peculiar degree. There is only one thing to be done with the men as they crowd in—to get them as far into the interior as possible, make them pack closely, and leave them to refresh themselves at their leisure. For the latter purpose there are bowls of punch and claret-cup ready brewed; and binsful of wine are laid down in the outer rooms—to be opened at anybody's bidding as occasion may arise. There is a strong demand for 'fizz'—as there always is when men have been drinking as much of other wine as they may happen to want—and the cheerful popping of the gold and silver-necked bottles is heard at pleasantly frequent intervals. This branch of the refreshment department is principally confined to the outer rooms, where the supper is laid on *en permanence*. In the principal apartment the punch and the claret-cup are the prevailing features, the apartment being especially devoted to the sacred cause of *smoke*.

By half-past eleven the rooms are full even in a Temple sense of the term; and it would be difficult to find in any other private assembly a more strange mixture of men, especially considering that they mostly belong to the same profession. They are of various ages and various styles. There are solemn men, scrupulously dressed, who glare haughtily about them; there are free and easy young gentlemen—mostly students—who have come in monkey jackets, and produce pet pipes from their pockets; there are wiry, hard-working little fellows, unpretending in appearance and professional to a fault; there are big, rollicking, convivial-looking men, with grandly affable manners, whom you would suppose never to have opened a book in their lives; and there are neat little prigs whose talk is pretentiously pointed, and

who patronise the proceedings from an elevation of intellect and deportment. There is a general clatter of conversation, both general and particular—talk in corners, talk across the tables, talk across the room; and there were a few speeches early in the evening, when the health of the hosts was proposed; but these were cut short as savouring of shop, and the only interruption to the proceedings now is an occasional song—which four of the solemn men, who are playing at whist, pronounce to be ‘bad form’—expressed of course only as a private opinion among themselves. As the hour waxes late many men disappear; but large numbers are disposed to keep it up, and the party, under their influence, becomes decidedly noisy. In the outer rooms the supper still attracts, and there the confusion is increased by hurried waiters and fluttered laundresses, who conduct themselves as guests as far as refreshment is concerned, and indeed extend the hospitalities to such persons as porters and policemen on the landing whenever those functionaries make their appearance—as they do at not unfrequent intervals, to see if anything is the matter. A considerable portion of the supper, in fact, find its way to the staircase, where departing guests, on their way down, find it difficult to steer their way between such things as cold fowls and ham, piles of plates, wine bottles, and cans of beer—a considerable assortment of which articles, by the way, are found there in the morning, to the scandal of quiet men abiding in the upper floors, who are visited by early attorneys.

The small hours threaten to become large ere the last man has departed; and the other festive parties having by this time been also brought to a conclusion, the Temple sinks into the respectability of repose. But there is not much rest for the called men. They have to be down at Westminster early in the morning—before the business of the courts commence—to sign their name to the roll in the Queen’s Bench. The process might be performed, I believe, on a subsequent

day, but it would be attended with inconvenience, and the rule is to attend on the morning after the call. There is a great gathering, as may be supposed, and a great comparison of notes about the night before—of which night before traces may be seen on the countenances of not a few. Of course the majority arrive too early—before the arrival of the official who conducts the formalities. The formalities, however, are at last gone through—including the payment of five shillings from every new member of the bar—whose signatures are at last inscribed upon a strip of parchment, to be preserved as an imperishable record of their admission to the profession.

Having thus become an actual barrister-at-law, nothing more remains for me to do, except to get into practice. For this purpose I take more imposing chambers than I had occupied before, join a circuit, and make my appearance during term at Westminster. My line is Common Law and Parliamentary, and between the two it will surely be strange if I do not make a fortune. I am aware that parliamentary practice will not give me an opening to the prizes of the profession; but I am content to sink ambition of this kind in consideration of the pecuniary emolument arising therefrom, and as I flatter myself that several parliamentary agents take an interest in me, it would be absurd to entertain scruples on this score. As for the circuit business, I soon find that it costs considerably more than it brings. From the attorneys direct I get exactly nothing, but a brief bearing the magnificent fee of a guinea is occasionally handed to me by the court—I get my share in fact of what is professionally called ‘soup.’ I hold a brief, too, now and then for somebody else, for which I receive nothing at all; and this, after several years’ experience, is all the good that circuit seems likely to do me.

Of parliamentary business I have better hopes—for a time. The parliamentary agents whom I supposed to take an interest in me make no

sign; but a brief in a committee really turns up, during my first year, from an unexpected quarter. A connection of my family was interested in opposing the project of a provincial corporation for supplying a town with water from a half-dry river, for the benefit apparently of themselves and the engineer, and at the certain expense of the ratepayers. My name was mentioned to him and he mentioned it to the attorney, the result being that I was engaged as junior counsel for the opponents of the bill. This brief was marked ten guineas; but with refreshers, consultations, and so forth, my fees amounted to from fifteen to five-and-twenty guineas a-day. This I had made up my mind to enjoy for some six weeks at least; for it was expected that the corporation would make a hard fight for it. They certainly began well. The great Mr. Grant-Ross, who makes his twenty thousand pounds or so every session of parliament, opened for them in grand and convincing style (for the trifling fee of five hundred pounds), and then hurried away, leaving his juniors to deal with the witnesses. Of these there was a long array, and their evidence promised well at the outset. But their case was a very weak one, as it turned out, and we could not manage to occupy more than a week in demolishing it. This was disappointing, considering my expectations; but still my fees amounted to a good round sum, and taking it for granted that I should have at least a dozen briefs of the kind every session, my parliamentary career seemed one of considerable promise. But not a single parliamentary brief ever came to me afterwards, nor have I ever heard of the chance of one. You have seen what my position was upon circuit. It did not improve. I became impatient, and at last disgusted. It was an expensive circuit, too; travelling expenses alone swallowed up a little fortune. The circuit, in fact, has only one advantage: it always enables a man to save a couple of hundred a-year by leaving it. Eventually I

made this masterstroke of economy, and added the amount in question to my available income. One bright idea suggests another. My chambers were expensive; including my clerk, they came to almost as much as the circuit. So in course of time I gave these up also, and contented myself with having my name painted up on another man's door—just to put in an appearance in case of being wanted. I have nothing more to do with the chambers than you have; but the clerk, to whom I occasionally give a slight honorarium, takes in my letters (consisting principally of tradesmen's circulars), and is prepared to tell any legal inquirer after me that I am down at Westminster or on circuit, according to the time of year; so that I do not in any way shut myself out of practice. The only other expense I incur is the annual subscription to Mr. Salter's robing-room at Westminster, and I have occasionally paid the modest demand made per term for the same convenience at the Central Criminal Court—at the Middlesex Sessions you are not expected to pay anything. But between all these chances I have not found that my practice at the bar is likely to keep me in gloves. And the worst of it is that I see no way of mending matters. A barrister-at-law is supposed to be serenely indifferent to business. He cannot ask for it; and were he to break through professional etiquette in this respect he would gain nothing by the means. He cannot push or pretend like a doctor, who deals direct with the public. A brass plate on his door, a brougham, a boy in buttons are of no use as advertisements; neither is a policeman to ring his night-bell, nor an anxious *employé* to call him out of church on Sundays to imaginary clients. Attorneys are made of sterner stuff than the public, and are not to be deceived even by analogous devices. There is no help for it, therefore, and I am afraid no hope. Some of these days I may get a county court, or perhaps a post in the colonies. Meanwhile I am rapidly settling down as an opponent of 'the system'—which

is of course in fault. I know that, had I but an opportunity of really distinguishing myself, I should distinguish myself to such an extent that my fortune would be made; but the opportunity never comes, and so the fault must be in 'the system.' Some change is clearly required. I care not what it be—I am prepared for anything. They may abolish the Inns of Court, if they please, as is every now and then proposed; though I am not quite sure that matters would be mended thereby. They may amalgamate the two branches of the legal profession, as is also occasionally suggested, which would not fail to lead to a change of some kind. I for one would not stand upon my dignity in the event of such a measure being seriously entertained. For the privileges of barristers have been diminished rather than increased by the process of time. They have some functions which they can exercise in chambers, but an advocate proper can do nothing for himself. Formerly a barrister was also a counsellor in fact as well as in name, and clients could go direct to him for his advice. In these days this is no longer the custom, and solicitors alone are consulted in initiatory proceedings. At the Scotch bar the practice, by the way, still obtains. An advocate in Edinburgh is not obliged to rent professional chambers. He may have his name on the doorplate of his private house, like a physician, and those who want him may seek him there. The latter arrangement is in itself a distinct advantage. In America the two branches of the profession are united; and it is only as its members advance in practice that they attach themselves to one or the other, for their own convenience. And the system, I believe, works so well that the majority of cases are settled without being argued in court.

I am not quite prepared to say what changes should be introduced in England. But of this I am certain, that something ought to be done to give members of the bar who desire to devote themselves to the profession a fair chance of prac-

tice. We cannot all of us marry attorneys' daughters (that is of course the understood means of advancement), and we cannot all of us gain influence to an equivalent extent over the other branch of the profession. But we have a right to claim, without either of these advantages, an opportunity of making ourselves known to possible clients among the public without aid of the kind. We were better off in days gone by, when solicitors held a lower position than they do now; when they were as often as not rather disreputable than otherwise, and acknowledged the social inferiority which still attaches to them by formal status. But in these days they are provokingly respectable as a rule, and many among them are not only so respectable, but so rich, that they actually patronise us—at any rate the less prosperous members of the bar. They are even interfering with us on our own ground. They not only undermine our practice in inferior courts of law, where they appear as advocates—but where to be sure few of us care to compete with them—but they put in claims to many offices which have been hitherto reserved for barristers. All this is wrong; and there is a growing opinion among the higher branch of the profession that if the privileges of solicitors increase in one way the privileges of barristers should increase in another way. What is wanted by the bar is independence of the attorneys. Each class has distinct duties, clearly enough defined; and both might work together without the present absurd etiquette that keeps them apart. I am aware that there are difficulties connected with the delicate duties of advocacy which might stand in the way of a direct association between a counsel and client; but these might be overcome by judicious regulation, which would give as large a share of freedom to the advocate as it is right for him to have. After all, the difficulty arises only in bad cases for defence, about which the attorney is supposed to know everything and the barrister nothing; and if the attorney claims to be as honour-

able a man as the barrister he must be considered equally unfitted to support a case which he knows to be a bad one on its merits. It is proper, of course, under existing conditions, that the advocate should not know more of his client than is contained in his brief; but the solicitor, if his honour is to go for anything, should be under similar restraint; and according to the present mode of proceeding there appears to be no provision on this score. There are difficulties in the way of an entire change—this must be admitted. But there are very good reasons, connected with the practice of the profession, for bringing barristers into closer connection with their clients, and making them independent of the agency of attorneys. As a beginning, the re-establishment of the barrister in his proper position as a counsellor would be a just and judicious change; and I doubt whether any member of the bar, assuming such functions, could be interfered with by the bench of his inn. There are many members, I am sure, who would willingly undertake the duties in question, but the difficulty is to make their willingness generally understood. They may not advertise; they may not place any special notification upon the doors of their chambers; they cannot appeal in any way directly to the public. But an understanding of the kind should in some way be arrived at if the profession of the bar is to be a profession affording to a competent person a fair chance of

practice. At present it is nothing of the kind. It is a profession to which hundreds of men go without dreaming of making a farthing by it. A county man wants to be a justice of the peace or a deputy lieutenant, and he finds the bar an available medium. Official people abroad—such as those whom we have met in hall—make it a means of gaining their private ends. Elaborate nobodies with a little money obtain the dignity as a sort of flower in their social button-holes. The bar—and this must be said for the credit of the profession—stands sufficiently high for these objects. But it is the worst calling in the world for a man without influence who means simply to practise. The difficulty has nothing to do with the conditions of admission to the bar, about which we hear from time to time a great deal of cavil. I should be sorry to see the present system changed for any other which would admit merely clever men who could come in by cramming. Such an arrangement would lower the social status of the profession, and lower the tone of advocacy; it would certainly leave no temptation to anybody to enter it for the sake of the flower in the social button-hole. The real want of the bar is independence of the attorneys—partial, if not entire; and until this want be satisfied the profession must remain in its present anomalous condition, and hundreds of men equally competent with myself remain without briefs.



THE ROMANCE OF A COUNTING-HOUSE.

CHAPTER I.

IT came about in this way. I had married and was going to make my fortune, and therefore (having that laudable end in view) left a good situation in Yorkshire to settle down in Liverpool as a merchant 'on my own account,' and commence to make it without delay. I had not much capital, and so resolved to economise at first. In course of time I imagined the tidy brougham and the country house across the Mersey would certainly come; and one serene September evening, many years ago, I was walking up and down St. George's landing-stage building castles in the air, wondering whether rents were high at New Brighton, and whether Kate would prefer a pony phaeton to a brougham. I am *not* sorry to add that I still reside in a modest house up Edge Hill way, and that I come to business as Cæsar went to Rome, according to Joe Miller, 'summa diligentia,' on the top of an omnibus. I was waiting for Mr. Moss Moses to return to his office in a street hard by—call it Mersey Street, and for the reason that Mr. Moss Moses had a furnished place to let which his advertisement called 'two spacious counting-rooms'—goodness knows I never counted much there in the shape of coin; and I did not like the situation; nor the narrow, dark staircase; nor the look of the boy of Hebrew extraction who bawled 'Cub id,' when I knocked, and told me 'Mr. Boses would be id at eight o'clock,' but twenty-five pounds a-year was very cheap, so I told my young friend I would call at that time, and look at the 'counting-rooms.'

How well I remember that night! The ferry-boats from the Cheshire shore gliding along with their lights twinkling like glowworms, the vast hull of the Great Eastern just visible in the Sloyne, the squared yards, and all a-taut look of a seventy-four of the old school, showing black and distinct against the daffodil sky, and the lap of the swell

against the under timbers of the stage—I was inclined to be sentimental; but Mr. Moss Moses claimed my attention, and once more I entered his office and found him awaiting me. He was a little, fat, good-tempered Jew, who spoke decent English; and who, I afterwards found out, was constantly affirming in season, and out of season, that he was no descendant of Abraham.

'Hillo, Brunton!' he cried, jumping from his chair. 'My lad told me you'd been; where have you been these two months and more? Look here, old fellow, I've advertised your place; but you can have it on the old terms.'

'Some mistake, sir, I believe,' and I handed him a card bearing the inscription 'Charles Harker.'

He took it and held it to the gas-light, looked at the back, considered it endways, and pondered over it upside down. Then taking the candle his clerk had brought, held it close to my face.

'If you are not disposed to proceed to business, I will bid you good-night,' said I, greatly annoyed at his manner.

'It's him, and it ain't him,' he said aloud; 'Carl never could look a man in the face as this one does. And yet I don't see my way through the features.'

'There is no necessity for you to trouble yourself about my features!' I exclaimed, opening the door—'good-night.'

'Stop, stop, my good sir! and don't be offended. It was a mistake. All Isaac's mistake, upon my honour.'

'All a b mistake,' echoed young Isaac.

My curiosity was excited, and, besides, I really wanted the offices; and I therefore allowed myself to be persuaded into mounting the narrow staircase, until we faced a door bearing the name of Brunton on it in white letters, and having the two upper panels glazed, more,

the name
defined a lot
More than
of any man
and I said
he was a fine
fellow, very
and who I'd
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out, and he
was so decent

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A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

Drawn by M. A. Boyd.



Evening
Dress?



The Locketomanie



The Gordian

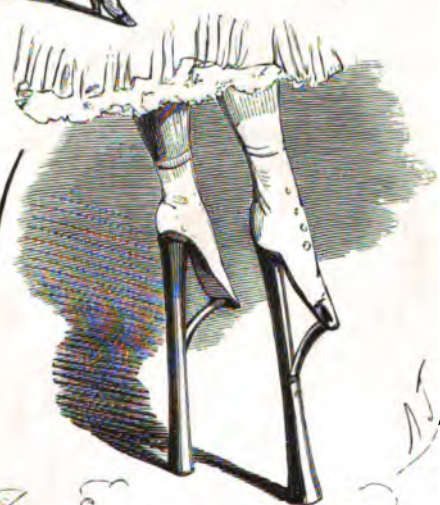




Frou-Frou



Chignon
à la Minerva



Elevators

FASHIONS
TO FOLLOW





A DAY-DREAM.

Drawn by R. Newcombe.

I should imagine, to supply light to the staircase, than for admission of light to the office.

Mr. Moss produced a key, and turning to me with a good-natured smile, said, 'I'd have sworn you were Brunton five minutes ago, but I am sure now that I was wrong. Carl always swore as he came upstairs, and you haven't. It's Brunton's face all but the eyes, and I'd swear to the eyes anywhere. That is to the twinkle of 'em, you know.'

And he unlocked the door and invited me within.

Walking to a table on which he had placed the light, I took a chair, and produced my pocket-book.

'Before we go further, Mr. Moss, let us quite understand each other. I have no wish to derive any benefit from any virtues Mr. Brunton may possess, and I am going to convince you that I am what I represent myself to be. Be good enough to read that letter.'

It was one from a merchant in the north, only received that morning, and mentioned circumstances which were sufficient to settle any doubts as to my identity.

Mr. Moss read it, folded it up briskly, and presented it to me with a bow.

'Sir, I apologise. I confess that up to this moment I fancied it was Carl; but what puzzled me was, that such a surly fellow should take to larking and playing the fool. You are very much like my last tenant, sir, that is all.'

'Very well; now that matter is settled, let us look at the rooms.'

The lighted gas showed me a large one and very barely furnished. There was a large leather-covered table with a desk on it, four chairs, an inkstand, and a partially filled waste-paper basket, and that was all.

'Rather meagre, Mr. Moss.'

'Now, my dear sir, what more could you want? Would you like a safe? I've got one to spare downstairs and you shall have it, and a new mat for your feet—there now—I hate haggling.'

'Let me see the other room, please.'

It was one which a person sitting

at the table would have right opposite to him, and it had no door. 'It was a clerk's office,' Mr. Moss said, 'and you wanted your eye on such chaps.' I suggested that the principal might sometimes want privacy, whereupon he said 'he had the door downstairs and it should be hung at once if I wished it.' But having no intention of engaging a clerk at present I told him it was of no consequence.

The room was about half the size of the outer one, and contained a desk and stool. There was a large closet for coals and such-like matters, and a good allowance of dust and cobwebs all over.

'I'll have it cleaned up to-morrow,' said Mr. Moss. 'It looks beautiful when clean, and you'll find the desk to be real Spanish mahogany.'

They would suit me well enough, and I told Mr. Moss so; paid him a quarter's rent in advance, and rose to depart.

'Oh! by-the-way, Mr. Moss,' I exclaimed, a sudden thought striking me; 'I will send a man to paint my name on the door, and on the wall downstairs.'

'Very good, sir; I would do it at once if I were you. Carl was a loose fish, and if you delayed it until you got here you might be annoyed.'

'How so? What was he?'

'Take a cigar first, Mr. Harker, you'll find no better in Liverpool. Lord! how like him you do look when I don't see your eyes.'

'And yet I have not been thought to resemble a loose fish before, Mr. Moss.'

'I didn't mean that. Have you never seen an ugly person resemble a very handsome one? I have many a time. Well, about Carl: he was here about two years, and call me a Jew if I could reckon him up. He used to come here about noon, and work up to eight or nine o'clock at night; but what business he worked at I could never find out. I know he had a big ledger, and two or three such books; but a big ledger won't make a business any more than a big carpet bag will, and he always carried one. He

would come and smoke a cigar with me now and then; but I never came up here during all that time, and he kept this door locked. He always seemed to be expecting a blow did poor Carl, more like a rat in a corner than anything else, poor beggar! Well, sir, one morning I found the key on my mat, and found the place just as you see it, and have never seen Carl since. One or two queer-looking men have inquired about him, and asked if he was coming back, and I said most likely he would, and likely enough he will.'

'Not at all an interesting story,' I thought, and I felt inclined to yawn in Mr. Moss's face; but I thanked him for his information, and promised to take possession in three days, which I spent in presenting my letters of introduction, and making other arrangements for the prosecution of my plans.

At length the eventful day arrived, and I stood in my own office, with my name emblazoned on the door and passage wall. I was waiting for a friend to call on me (who, by-the-way, had promised to put me in the way of doing some business that very day), and felt impatient for his arrival in consequence.

The office was clean and tidy, and the floors had been well scrubbed.

Why hadn't they emptied the waste-paper basket of all that lumber?

The office-keeper had lighted a fire, and I took up the basket to perform the operation myself; but from some cause or other I placed it on the table and began idly to burn the scraps one by one.

I had nearly disposed of them all when a scrap attracted my attention and I read it. It was torn so as to leave a few words intact, and it ran thus—

'Louise has given your description, and you may rely on our finding you. Forward the plates at once, or——'

Then another piece of mysterious paper, apparently a plan of some place or other.

What did this mean?

But I had no time to consider, for my friend entered, and putting the two pieces of paper in my drawer, I emptied the basket in the fire, and went out with him to do a good day's work.

Returning late in the evening, I relit the fire, and addressed myself to the writing of two important letters to be posted by 11.30 that night, in order to be in time for the Cunard liner, which sailed early in the morning; and then it was that the black darkness of the doorless room opposite to me began to trouble me most.

It had troubled me before, but on this night it troubled me tenfold. From childhood I have been imaginative, and knowing this, I stirred the fire, called myself an ass, and went on with my letter. But not for long. My eyes wandered to the black darkness of the doorway, and I began to ransack my memory for statistics of men who could tell by some occult power if any one were hidden in the room they entered; and I laughed aloud when I remembered that I had read of one sensitive gentleman, who by this same occult sense had found that a surgeon's skeleton was in a closet behind him.

I own I dislike being in the dark, but I will do myself the justice to say that I have resolution enough to overcome the dislike.

Therefore I proposed to myself to very quietly walk into the dark room which troubled me (and without a light), look out of the windows, and slowly return.

I went—the very first step beyond the threshold dispelled my fears. I could see the glimmer of the stars through the glass, hear the rattle of the cabs outside. Why, it was quite a cheerful place, after all!

Ha! there was a shuffling noise there by the closet, and then my fears returned and overpowered me. I strove to walk out like a tragedy hero; but my pace quickened as I neared the door, and heard the shuffling noise close to me, and the next moment a powerful hand was at my throat, and helpless on the floor with the cold muzzle of a

pistol pressed to my head, I was bound and dragged into the outer office, thrust into my chair and confronted by two quiet-looking men, one of whom laid his revolver on the table, saying at the same time with an ugly sneer: 'So, Brunton, we have caught you at last.'

CHAPTER II.

The speaker was a mild, intelligent-looking man of about thirty-five. In a proper dress he would have looked like a high-church clergyman. His companion was evidently a foreigner, and I imagine a German. He was about fifty years of age and wore spectacles, and a profusion of beard and whiskers covered more than half his face. But he had a winning smile and good teeth, which he often took an opportunity of showing.

'We have found you at last.'

I am thankful to say that I am not nervous when I see a danger, and I boldly replied—

'My name is Harker and not Brunton; Mr. Moas, the landlord of these premises, has noticed my resemblance to his late tenant, and is satisfied that I am not the same. Depend upon it that I shall make you repent this outrage.'

I tried to rise to call for help from the street, but the pistol was cocked and pointed at me, and there was that in the man's face which cautioned me against rashness in my helpless position.

'I will sit down,' I replied, 'and hear what you have to say; but if I choose to do it I shall do my best to raise an alarm in spite of your revolver.'

'Vell spoke, Carl,' said the foreigner; 'Louise always say he a plucky one.'

'Now then, Brunton,' whispered the other, 'let us have no nonsense. We have not met before, it is true, but Louise has so well described you, that putting another name on your door was simply idiotic. Besides one of ours has watched for your return, and we communicated with him directly we landed. Go free if you like, but we will have the plates.'

'Dat's the matter vid us,' echoed the German; 've vill have the plates.'

'I know nothing of any plates,' I cried, 'nor of Louise, nor of you. All I know is, that you will see the inside of a prison very shortly.'

'And you think you can throw us, throw ME over in this way! Do you think you deal with children?'

'I think I deal with a burglar. Most certainly with a rascal of some sort or other.'

Here my two friends held a whispered conference. Then he of the revolver turned sharply towards me.

'Will you marry Louise? Will you give up the plates, and marry my sister?'

'She love you like old boots,' added the German; and from which I opine that he prided himself on a knowledge of English idiom.

In spite of my serious position I was getting thoroughly amused. The dark doorway held unknown terrors to my excited imagination; but two commonplace fellows who had made a mistake only caused a feeling of merriment, even in spite of the revolver.

'I am sorry I cannot oblige you,' I replied. 'I am flattered by the lady's preference; but having one wife already, I fear I must decline taking a second; and as for the plates, please explain what you mean.'

The answer to this flippant speech was a blow on the face, which sent the blood streaming on the floor.

'You'll remember insulting the sister of Louis Orloff! Here, Baron, let us gag him, and search; he will be raising an alarm presently.'

They thrust a piece of rope between my teeth, compressing my windpipe to make me open my mouth; and there I sat helpless whilst they turned out the contents of my desk and drawers, not forgetting my cashbox, which was opened with a key taken from my waistcoat pocket, and the contents appropriated. Knowing that the two scraps of paper I had found in the waste-paper basket, and placed in my drawer, must have reference to the visit, I watched very anxiously.

ously when they opened it. But they escaped notice, and I felt that I had got some clue to the mystery, even these men escaped; and I had quite determined that they should not escape, for I was insecurely bound, and had been working hard to get my right hand free, and, thanks to having a very narrow one, I now found myself able to slip it through the loop which encircled the wrist; but I 'bided my time,' for I saw that a false move might bring a bullet through my head.

'De plates is in ze oder room, Carl Brunton, mon ami,' said the Baron, smiling, and patting my shoulder. 'Vy not say? Vy shoot we you? You do dem so well, ve no get any like dem. And you use them yourself, and den, Ach Gott! you upset de cart of de apple.'

'Yes,' I thought; 'and it's odd to me if I don't upset your cart of de apple before long.'

'In dare; in back room?' asked the Baron, with another amiable smile.

I said, 'Yes,' with my eyes.

'See now, my Louis, you were too rough. You into him pitch like dam. So see him amiable.' Then to me—

'And you will marry Louise, who love you like old boots?'

My other hand was free now. I tried to speak, and implored with my eyes for the gag to be removed.

The Baron removed it, and while doing so I resolved on a plan of operations.

'You will marry Louise and give us the plates?'

'I will give you every satisfaction.'

'That is business,' said Louis Orloff, coming forward. 'First the plates. Then you return with us to New York, and keep your promise to Louise. Why give us this trouble? I tell you frankly that the expense will be deducted from your share, and that you will be strictly watched in future. I should have cut your throat but for my promise to Louise. Now, where are the plates?'

'Look in the closet in the next room; rake out the coals, and take what you find.'

'Good. Come, Baron.'

And they left me to operate on the coals. Springing up, I seized the revolver, darted to the door, and in a moment had locked them in. But my triumph was of short duration: for Orloff was on the other side like lightning, the rotten woodwork tore out under his vigorous wrench, and his hand was on my throat before I could grope my way to the stairs.

Then I knew that life depended on the struggle, and I fought like one possessed for the revolver. The Baron came to his friend's help; but I found time and opportunity to send him reeling to the ground. Orloff was the weaker man, but he outdid me in skill; and a dextrous feint threw me off my guard, leaving the revolver in his hands.

Purple with passion, he fired instantly, and I felt a sharp sting in my left shoulder; and then all earthly things seemed to be fading away, and a world beyond opening to view.

When I recovered, I found myself laid on a mattress on the office-table, and my wife tearfully bending over me. There was a calm-faced surgeon, too, who showed me the ball he had extracted, and told me to cheer up, for I should be better in a few days, for no damage was done. Mr. Moss was there too, and came to my bed—I mean my table-side, and whispered how he had been called up by the police, who, hearing a pistol-shot, had come upstairs, and arrested Orloff and the Baron, and, finding me on the ground bleeding, had sent for a surgeon and my wife, having found my private address from a letter in my pocket.

I was only faint from loss of blood; the bullet did little damage, and I preferred getting up, and then gave an account of the evening's adventure, not noticing at the time that a tall inspector of police was in the room.

'Will you kindly show me those pieces of paper?' he said, advancing. 'I have the men in Mr. Moss's office; but beyond the assault on you I have no evidence against them; but I know them well.'

I produced them, and the inspector fastened on the one which seemed to be a plan, then looking around, said—

‘This is a plan of your office.’

‘Call me a Jew if it ain’t!’ exclaimed Mr. Moss, taking it.

‘Yes, it is certainly a plan of your office. See, here is the doorway, and there comes the other room. Then there is a cross against the fireplace in this room, on what I judge from the lines to mean the fourth board from the hearthstone, and another cross against the sixth from the hearthstone in the other room. Get a crowbar, Mr. Moss.’

‘There’s one downstairs.’

I do believe that if you’d asked for a crocodile he would have got one ‘downstairs.’

Crowbar and a policeman to wield it were soon produced, and then the mystery was unravelled.

Close to where I sat were unearthed several copper plates for the forging of Russian rouble notes of various amounts; and in the back room under the flooring were found several hundreds of well-executed forgeries carefully soldered up in a tin case, together with correspondence implicating Orloff and the Baron. It appeared that Brunton was engaged by a New York gang to engrave the plates, and that he had never seen his employers, the agent between them being the Louise before mentioned, whose fair hand I had been compelled to decline. Brunton had evidently become frightened, and had fled. He was no traitor, or he would have decamped with the plates. Perhaps the dread of having to espouse Louise may have had to do with his flight. She was a very handsome woman, if I may judge from a photograph of her found in the tin case, but looked like one accustomed to rule, and who would not hesitate to administer wholesome correction to her spouse.

Assisted into a carriage which was waiting, I had the satisfaction of seeing the Baron and Orloff brought down in handcuffs, the Baron regarding me with a sweet smile, and Orloff scowling on me like a fiend. I did not prosecute,

for they were so well known to the police as forgers, that there was evidence enough for the Russian Embassy to procure a conviction and a sentence of ten years’ penal servitude; and in due time I recovered, and dismissed the matter from my mind.

But I had not heard the last of it. About twelve months after the trial and condemnation of the Baron and his friend there came one night a timid knock at my office door, and my clerk (for I had such a luxury then) ushered in what, at first sight, seemed to be a moving bundle of rags. Strictly speaking, the bundle of rags insisted on seeing me, and ushered itself in, spite of all remonstrances.

It came and stood before me, and resolved itself into the resemblance of a man—a man lean, haggard, sunken-eyed, ragged, and dirty, but with a face something like my own; and without putting a question, I knew that I stood face to face with Carl Brunton, and I addressed the rags by that name.

‘I took that name,’ the poor, shivering thing replied, ‘but my name is—but no matter. May I speak to you?’

‘Yes; go on.’

‘Will you give me some drink first? I have had none to-day, and I feel delirium tremens coming on. Oh! how cold it is, and how I shiver!’

I sent the clerk for some brandy, which he took raw, and with shaking hand held out the glass for more.

‘I imagine it is Mr. Moss you want to see, is it not? If so, you will find him to-morrow, at ten o’clock.’

‘No, no, you, you I want—I—I am very poor, very poor. Will you give me sixpence?’

I gave him half-a-crown.

‘Now what can I do for you?’

‘I—I left some property here when I went away. You won’t refuse to give it up? I seem poor, but I am rich—ah! so rich!—and I will pay you well.’

‘You mean the forged rouble-notes and the plate you engraved them from?’

‘Ah! Who told you that? Then

you have found them, and used them? I ran away from them, and wished to lead a better life, but they drew me back; and now you have robbed me, and I shall starve.'

I explained to the poor wretch what had become of his possessions, and how they were found, and inquired if he had not heard of the fate of his accomplices.

'No; I have been wandering about the country, living in hospitals and workhouses, because they hunt me down from place to place. They will kill me as they killed the Posen Jew and the engraver at Stockholm, all because they demanded a fair share. They are dogging me to-night—one of them is outside now. Let me see, what did I come here for? Oh, sixpence. Lend me sixpence; I'll give you a hundred pounds for it to-morrow.'

I made a further donation, and, as the man was evidently in a state of delirium, I told my clerk to fetch a medical man. But before he could execute the order, the bundle of rags crept down the narrow stairs, sitting on each step, and wriggling by aid of his hands to the next

below, whilst we, unable to pass him, looked on, wondering how it would all end.

The street gained, he stood upright, and casting a terrified glance around, fled away into the darkness, and we, following in the direction he had taken, learned shortly afterwards that a beggar had thrown himself into the Mersey from St. George's landing-stage, and had sunk to rise no more.

His body was never found, and I, having had enough of Mersey Street, moved my quarters, much to the regret of Mr. Moss, for, 'quoth he, 'Two of 'em are at Portland, and another at the bottom of the river; so you may call me a Jew if any one troubles you again.'

But I went; and the office is still without a tenant, and I shudder when I pass through the street at night, and looking up, see the two black shining windows, like two great eyes watching me, and fancy I can see a shadowy form in rags, pressing its face to the glass, and gibbering and mowing at the busy stream of human life which surges to and fro for ever.

W. R.



RIDDLES OF LOVE.

CHAPTER XXV.

DISILLUSIONMENT—DOWNFALL OF A FAIRY PALACE.

IT is pleasant to wake one morning and find oneself famous; and on two or three or any number of mornings the repetition of the assurance comes agreeably. There are some constitutions that can bear any amount of laudation, and flourish in it like flowers in the sunshine. But for the full enjoyment of the result the process should have been more or less unconscious—should at least not have been accompanied by wear and tear, watchfulness and anxiety, which detract from the freshness of the charm. Miss Mirabel, on the Monday morning which succeeded the Saturday evening whose events are above recorded, found herself famous in a large London world—as far at least as the daily journals could establish her position. The weekly papers published in the interval—carefully procured as soon as they appeared by order of Mrs. Grandison—had anticipated the verdict which was next day generally announced; and between the two May ought to have been thoroughly triumphant. Actors and actresses are blamed sometimes for being more sensitive to public criticism—more anxious to obtain praises from the press—than the members of any other profession. But how can they be otherwise? Setting aside the regular professions, with which that of the stage has little in common, the seekers for public favour in other pursuits have a certain kind of independence. The author who has written his book—the artist who has painted his picture—may leave the book or the picture to make its way. The critics may take no notice, but the work may still become public and bring fame to the worker. But with the actor or the actress the case is widely different. Art with them is not long, and life is still fleeting. If the public is to be made aware of their merits there is no time to

be lost—it may be too late any day. Players may develop in power and perfect themselves by practice. But they cannot perpetuate past efforts. *Their* early performances—equivalent to the first book or the first picture of the writer or the painter—can be handed down only by tradition, and the time comes when their greatest triumphs become traditionary also. They of all others must gather their roses while they may, for time goes a-flying with them faster than with other people, and if you do not take them on the wing you cannot take them at all. Orators—of the senate, the bar, or the pulpit—leave something behind them by which their genius may be judged. The actor when he makes his last exit leaves nothing but a name. People of his time talk about him with admiring tenderness; but the next generation is indifferent if not incredulous, and his memory survives only in contemporary records, and ‘reminiscences,’ it may be, of writers who can convey little more to posterity than an idea of his personal peculiarities.

But everybody knows these conditions of the dramatic career, and I allude to them only in reference to the players’ sensibility to contemporary praise—in which he is quite as practical as he is supposed to be vain. And I should not have alluded to them at all except in reference to Miss Mirabel, who was more agitated by reading the records of her triumph in the papers than she had been in experiencing the triumph itself.

‘This is a great deal more than I had expected,’ she said to Mrs. Grandison, who came up to see her after breakfast when Captain Pemberton had gone out—pointing to the pile of journals with which the prototype of Marie Antoinette had provided her.

‘More than you had hoped, you

mean, my dear,' returned the experienced lady, glancing deferentially at the daily organs of public opinion.

'No, no,' said May, 'more than I wished. I shall never be able to act if they do this. Why cannot they let me play a part in my own way, and carry the audience with me—as you call it—if I can, without noticing everything I do and how I do it?'

'But, my child, this is all what is required—nothing could be more complimentary. It is all just as it should be. I can vouch for the fact; for I read all the papers over before I sent them up to you. One of them is a little cold perhaps; but the "Epoch"—the most important—is warmer than any. Only think, my dear child, of the way in which it speaks of your beauty.'

May flushed with indignation.

'Yes,' she retorted; 'and that is one of the things I complain of. What has my—what they call my beauty—to do with my rendering of the part? Such remarks, I think, are as insulting to an actress as to a lady in private life.'

Mrs. Grandison smiled from her elevation of experience.

'I hope, my dear, that you will never have more to complain of in the critics than excess of that kind. It does immense good with the public, you know. An actress could have no better advertisement than a reputation for beauty.'

And Mrs. Grandison, who was attired in one of these wonderful morning robes of hers, glanced at herself in the glass over the mantelpiece, not displeased, apparently, at the illustration to her remarks which it presented.

'But I do complain,' said May, petulantly. 'It is very beautiful—what they say about the piece, and the character I represent—but they need not say all they do about me. I don't mind so much that they make me mean more than I ever intended—I, who don't know how I came to have any power of the kind—but they might refrain from describing my points as if I were a dancing doll.'

The dancing doll was too much for Mrs. Grandison's gravity.

'My dear child,' she said, when her laughter was over, 'you will never make an actress if you go on in this manner.'

'And I *shall* go on in this manner,' returned May, with more determination in her manner than Mrs. Grandison had ever seen before. 'I *shall* go on in this manner if people write about me in this way. Why, they describe me as if I were a racehorse.'

The racehorse made Mrs. Grandison laugh as much as the dancing doll.

'Come, come, child,' she said, 'this will never do. You ought to be very much obliged to the critics for their support. You deserve what they said, as I always told your papa and Mr. Mandeville you would do. But people don't always get what they deserve—at least when they deserve praise. I know that when I was—younger'—here Mrs. Grandison gave a glance at the glass—'there were men on the press who used to run me down, though I was very civil to them all; I doubt whether if I should have succeeded as I have done in my career but for a few devoted admirers among the writers; and they used to describe me from top to toe. You should have read what they said. Yours is nothing to it.'

Mrs. Grandison, you see, was beginning to take a little interest in herself by way of a change.

'I can assure you, Mrs. Grandison,' pursued May, 'that however flattered I may feel at the praise, I am the reverse of pleased to be made so public. And how am I to prevent it? What am I to do with the critics?'

'I know what I should do with them—and that as soon as possible—I should ask them to dinner.'

But May did not take that practical view of the case, her object being exactly the reverse of that of Mr. Mandeville. I am afraid that with all her talent for the stage she was not a born artist.

'I wonder,' she asked, pursuing the train of thought suggested by the comments upon her beauty—'I

wonder if I should have succeeded as well, or succeeded at all, had I been seriously ugly instead of—what I am, or what they say I am. That little woman who played the gondolier's mother is horribly plain—there is no denying it—but she acted beautifully, and made her little part a gem. She is a perfect actress in her way, but she had little or no applause, and the papers this morning mention her nearly all in the same terms—that she “rendered the little part entrusted to her with her usual judiciousness.” What a dreadful thing it must be to be written about in that way!

‘Worse even than being told that you are a woman of wonderful beauty and fascination, and one of the best actresses on the stage,’ suggested Mrs. Grandison, slyly.

‘Well, I must confess that,’ said May, laughing; ‘but what I dislike is the idea of people coming to see me, and applauding me as they did on Saturday, mainly, if not entirely, on account of my—my beauty, if I must call it so. And I could not help noticing that Miss Rosemary, who is very pretty, certainly, but has no ideas of acting beyond being pert, is a great favourite with the public, who took scarcely any notice of poor Mrs. Merlin, who played the gondolier's mother. Then, again, there were the girls who danced—what a preposterous idea, by-the-way, to have dancing of that kind at a ball in a doge's palace!—the girls who danced received quite as much applause as anybody, including Bianca herself—’

And here May stopped, lest Mrs. Grandison should suppose that there was a little jealousy lurking beneath her protest.

‘Well, the dancing was a mistake,’ said the elder lady, addressing herself first to the dramatic question, ‘and unworthy of the character of the piece, as I told Mandeville when he introduced it; but he says dancing always does good when you can drag it in; and he takes a great interest in those sisters, Flossey and Tossy Millington, or in one of them, at any rate, and they are very clever girls, you will admit, though about as much out of place in the doge's

palace as a dolphin in a sentry-box. As for what you say, my dear, about being run after for your beauty’—May, I need scarcely observe, had used no such expression as ‘run after’—‘I must confess that I think you are too particular. You might just object to going to a ball, where you would be asked probably for just the same reason, or to a musical party, where the motive was to get you to sing. You surely cannot expect the public, any more than the ordinary run of society, to have the same instincts as a lover, and to adore you without knowing why.’

This did not meet the point of May's objection, which had reference to an ideal of art which Mrs. Grandison was not disposed to discuss. But May did not press her views upon the actress's attention, and allowed her to believe that she had gained the victory. She even gave a half assent when Mrs. Grandison added in conclusion, ‘You had better ask Captain Pemberton to make acquaintance with the critics, and have some of them to dinner. And now good-bye for the present, my dear Miss Mirabel’—here there was a resumption of her grand manner, which never forsook her upon any occasion when the slightest ceremonial was concerned—‘we shall drive together to the theatre, I presume; and—I was nearly forgetting to mention it—it would be as well to go a little early, as you should get your second dress altered a little—the skirt on one side does not hang quite as it should—and, will you excuse me to advising you? I would, in your place, look through my part again in the course of the day: it is safest to do so. You were wonderfully perfect as to the words, but there are always little points that suggest themselves for reconsideration. Good-morning, my dear Miss Mirabel, good-morning to you.’

And Mrs. Grandison passed from the room with a grand sweep, worthy of Marie Antoinette in her most courtly days.

Her concluding words were another check upon May's imagination. She was well aware of the

fact—had she not heard ‘Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge,’ announced for repetition every evening until further notice?—but she had not yet realised the idea that in a few hours she must be once more on the stage, with all the trials and troubles of *Bianca* to represent once more to a new audience, or an audience that would be nearly new at any rate. So that besides enduring the drudgery of repetition, she must incur the ordeal of another experiment, not so severe as the first, but one not to be lightly regarded. She had hitherto considered the life of an actress as one of holiday and excitement. She was already disillusionised. Her dream was at an end. The fairy palace by the lake with the bright waters, the scene of her ideal abode, had become a mass of wood and canvas, rough painting, and mechanical contrivances. The transparent atmosphere and the beaming sky were mere mockeries managed with hanging drops and lime-lights. The beautiful people who animated the beautiful scene were men and women, commonplace in person, with no idea of the destinies beyond their daily wants—people with pecuniary countenances, whose pleasures were little more than consolations, people who drew salaries and in many instances drank beer!

It was with this charming view of the prospects before her and the fascination of fame, that May read through the part of *Bianca* with an entirely altered spirit, and eventually drove to the theatre a little early in order to have the alteration made in the ill-hanging skirt.

CHAPTER XXVI.

NIGHT AND MORNING.

There is a business reality about a theatre behind the scenes which forbids fanciful reflections; and a less likely place for the indulgence of private wretchedness could scarcely be devised. The fact was fortunate for May, as it brought her back to the necessities of her situation, and saved her from a great deal of mental disquiet. Al-

though her experience before the public had been very small, as we have seen, her attendance at rehearsals had done something for her in the way of discipline, and the call to arms once made, she found herself obeying it without fear or fluttering. Some slight changes had been made in the piece. The dialogue was a little ‘cut’ here and there ‘to make it play closer,’ as Mr. Mole said; but the part of *Bianca* remained unaffected, Miss Mirabel being too important a personage to be a subject for this kind of reform; so the only alteration which that lady had to superintend was that of the dress which wouldn’t ‘hang.’

The young actress could not fail to be flattered by the deference paid to her by everybody in the theatre, even by those whose position did not give them the privilege of avowing it in words; and the only exceptions were two or three ladies who had charitably prophesied her failure, and were not upon general grounds greatly charmed with her success. As she passed to her own apartment the subordinates were profuse in hat-touching attentions; and when she appeared in the green-room everybody who had the honour of her acquaintance, with the exceptions just noted, were warm in their congratulations. Mr. Mandeville himself was less enthusiastic than might have been expected, but this in reality was a flattering sign. Miss Mirabel had placed herself beyond the necessity for his patronage, and his present policy was not to encourage her to set too high a price upon herself, for as yet no engagement had been made. There was simply an understanding that Miss Mirabel should make a trial of her powers for three nights, as a basis for subsequent negotiation, and Mr. Mandeville, liberal man as he now was with his money, had not made his fortune by liberality, and could not shake off an old habit which he had formed of taking it for granted that everybody with whom he had to deal intended to take a mean advantage of him if possible, thus necessitating, as he philosophically considered, a preli-

minary action on his own part of a similar character. There were various stories told of his early generalship in this direction which he would not have relished had they reached his ears in these his princely days of prosperity. But minor actors in his company, and others who were impertinent enough to remember the time when he could not build theatres—to say nothing of churches—for himself, related them with great gusto at the taverns they frequented, and the remembrance, I have no doubt, considerably softened the sorrows of their own mean estate.

A favourite reminiscence was one concerning a coat. Mr. Mandeville was always partial to dressing, in the ornamental and luxurious sense of the term, and he liked to get his dress, like everything else, at a minimum of outlay. He ordered upon one occasion a coat, not from the kind of tailor he now patronised, but from a firm of the popular kind, which had a large shop-front, and did not disdain to exhibit goods in the windows with prices affixed. It was a lovely garment, carefully built to his figure, giving him a chest and waist such as few men could boast, and adorned with a prodigality of velvet and every possible kind of accessory. It was such a special coat, in fact, as only about three men in London would think of wearing, and when it was finished he threw it upon the tailor's hands, declaring it too tight. He did not object to the price, he said. Seven pounds was not much for a coat of the kind, and he was not the man to haggle about money; but what could he do if the thing would not fit? Having thus declared himself, and regardless of entreaties and remonstrances, he left the shop. Passing by two days after, by the merest accident, he saw the coat displayed in the window with the price ticketed upon it, 5*l*. Mr. Mandeville was observed to shake his head. A week after he passed again—again by the merest accident—and saw the same garment still unsold, reduced to 3*l*. 10*s*. Mr. Mandeville upon this occasion was observed to smile; and the

same afternoon a subordinate belonging to his theatre purchased the coat at that price and paid for it. Mr. Mandeville received his purchase with great pleasure and put it on. It fitted him admirably now: he must have fallen away a little since he had tried it on. But he was not quite satisfied. There is no glory in gaining a victory if your enemy is not conscious of his defeat. So, arrayed in his new plumage, he walked next day into the tailor's shop. 'What do you mean,' said he, 'by selling me a coat with a loose button? Get your man to fix it at once.' And while the discomfited tailor was engaged in executing the order, his liberal customer made the philosophical reflection, 'What a world this is, where a man can never get the worth of his money without fighting for it!'

Another little historical anecdote showed him in an even less dignified light. The original authority was a gentleman who had written a piece for Mr. Mandeville's theatre, and was actively engaged in directing its production. One day the manager proposed, to facilitate business, that the two should have an early dinner on the premises. 'But you must come out with me,' he said, 'while I order it in; we can talk on the way you know.' After ordering the more important parts of the banquet, Mr. Mandeville entered a greengrocer's shop and commanded some potatoes, which were put into the scales while he stayed talking. The tradesman turned aside for a minute to find an additional weight, or for some purpose of the kind, and in the interval Mr. Mandeville pocketed two potatoes, observing in a quiet way to his astounded companion, 'If you do not take care of yourself, my boy, these rascals will always cheat you.'

The incident is so low in its nature that I would not have dared to tell it of so great a man as Mr. Mandeville, but that it happens to be simply true.

The present were very different days with Mr. Mandeville; but instincts are strong, and he had conceived the idea of making a long

engagement with the new actress upon easy terms to himself.

Mr. Mole, who knew nothing of the new policy of his chief, said everything to May that he meant, and he meant so much that he was quite lost in laudation. 'My dear madam,' he concluded, 'you have the ball at your feet; you may command wherever you go; the public are with you, and you may do what you please with them. I am not speculating now'—and Mr. Mole gave a sigh for his own past excitements, and the prudent course to which he was now resigned—'but there are no terms which I would not offer you, were I in the way of making any offer at all. And, you will excuse me, dear madam, for giving you a little piece of advice as a friend, if I may so call myself; do not too hastily close with Mandeville—you are worth any money to him.'

May laughed, and while thanking Mr. Mole for his good offices, said that she had never had any conversation with Mr. Mandeville on such a subject, and that any arrangements between them would be made by Captain Pemberton.

Mr. Mole's sanguine calculations were justified by the fact that the house by this time was full to the ceiling, though the band had but just begun to play; the audience, in order to be in time for the great attraction of the evening, having surrendered themselves to the favourite farce—represented about a thousand times before—of 'Jemima's Day Out.'

In due time the curtain rose once more upon 'Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge,' and once more, for some three hours' duration, was May surrendered to the hopes and fears, the struggles and the final triumph, of the imaginary *Bianca*. Once more was she possessed by the inspiration of her art, and once more were her efforts greeted with the unbounded plaudits of the audience. This time May's performance, spirited and vivid as she could not choose but make it, was more perfect in many ways than before; and the enthusiasm with which it was received

had the additional value of being uninspired by partiality and managerial boxes and stalls. The free list had served its purpose on Saturday, and was now punctually 'suspended' until the period pictured by Highjinks, when blank boxes should wring the brow, and it would be wanted again in the capacity of a ministering angel.

No such thorough triumphs had been hitherto known at the Imperial before. It was complete in every way. Even the rival actresses did not venture the 'little game'—as Mr. Mole called their attempts at rivalry—of the first night. Mrs. Vallance, in the exercise of her own discretion, was almost as much subdued as was compatible with her part; and Miss Rosemary—who had received a hint from the management—was fairly brought to her bearings, and refrained at least from being offensive in her flirtation with the comic gondolier. The sensation leap of course made the legitimate impression of sensation leaps upon a fashionable audience; but this was a matter of course, and did not detract from the effect of the serious scenes. The recallings, the bouquets, and the bravas, on the second night, were repeated with all the fervour of the first; and culminated at the conclusion with a similar ovation. Once more May rode back to Brompton in the hired brougham, radiant and elate, like a crowned conqueror on his car. She had forgotten all her scruples. What cared she for the impertinent adulation of critics? She would no more be May Pemberton, the loveable Lady Bountiful of Shuttleton; the future should know her but as Miss Mirabel, the admired queen of the stage!

But next mornings are great modifiers of midnight resolves. If people did all the desperate things they intend to do without the sweet counsel of sleep, society would be much in the same condition as the inhabitants of the drop of water we see sometimes through the microscope, who are all eating one another up. I am not sure that society is much better even now; but however it be, it is as well that it is no

worse. The soft influence of the 'gentle thing beloved from pole to pole,' came over May's welcome weariness that night with a strange sense of soothing. If spirits ever leave their bodies during sleep, May's spirit must have been at Shuttleton, taking her back to her old life. The theatre, with its glare and glitter, its gilded gaiety and false fascination, its footlights and its fiddlers—had all passed away and left no trace of ever having been. May was once more the loveable Lady Bountiful of Shuttleton, and had no thought of ever becoming the admired queen of the stage. It was a sweet dream, and seemed to extend over a long period of time, bringing with it the feeling of permanence which belongs to true happiness. May lived years of her old life once again before the dawn; and when she awoke it was with a strange, undefined but all-influencing sense of change. At first her fancy beheld her little room in the cottage, with the jasmine and the roses in the casement. But a second glance dispelled the delusion; the Brompton lodgings stood confessed, and brought with them all the realities of her new existence. May meditated as she had never meditated before, upon many things; and it was with some embarrassment that she prepared to resume her new life and meet her father at breakfast.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FREE AS THE AIR—EASTWARD, HO!

Captain Pemberton was in a great hurry to go out, for he was much in demand Citywards just now; but before he went, he threw across the table, for May's perusal, a letter which he had just received.

It was from Mr. Mandeville, asking for an interview with the captain at three o'clock that day, at the theatre, in order to discuss the terms of Miss Mirabel's engagement.

The captain made but little remark in reference to the request.

'I am as proud as anybody can be,' he said, 'at your reception last night, as well as on Saturday—

proud that I should have a daughter who could so distinguish herself—in a manner which to me is still incomprehensible. But I tell you candidly, May, that I have still my own views about the step which it is proposed to take; and I should like you to consider well before we commit ourselves.'

'Oh, here is a postscript overleaf, which I think you did not see, papa,' said May, rather glad of a diversion from the main question; 'Mr. Mandeville says that, in case we should not agree to-day, he concludes that I shall appear to-morrow—I am bound of course for to-night—and for the rest of the week, pending a settlement.'

'That gives us time at any rate,' returned the captain; 'but I will be here again at one—it is now ten—and I dare say we shall be able to come to a conclusion without further delay.'

So Captain Pemberton went off to a private meeting of the promoters of 'The Great India Amelioration and Development of the Resources Company,' and May remained at home to consider several new ideas which were developing *their* resources in her mind.

The process was somewhat expedited by the arrival of the morning papers from Mrs. Grandison's room, and a visit from the great lady herself very shortly after. Mrs. Grandison found May by no means so well pleased as a lady should be who has London at her feet—to say nothing of the provinces of Great Britain, with Ireland, the Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark. May, in fact, showed signs of being very much annoyed, and threw down one of the papers in a petulant manner as Mrs. Grandison entered the room.

'I came to congratulate you again, my dear child,' said Marie Antoinette; 'but you do not seem very cheerful over your success.'

'My dear Mrs. Grandison,' replied May, glad of a confidante; 'I am very miserable, and I wish you to know it. I do not quite like the stage, and I think of leaving it.'

'Leaving it! Why you must be mad. Excuse me for saying so.

But with your opportunities—with a name and fame already earned, in two short nights—you would be wild indeed to relinquish your position. Have you seen what some of the papers say this morning?

'Yes, I have; and what they say—and something else that I will tell you presently—makes me the more inclined that way—has, I think, determined me. I see that two of the papers are determined not to leave me at rest. They still comment upon me in a manner as if I were public property.'

'So you are, my dear; that is what we all desire to be. Why nothing can be more complimentary than the manner in which the "Epoch" has returned to the subject of the new piece.'

'It is very flattering, I admit, and I suppose I should get over the ordeal of public comment by degrees—though it is certainly very free. But look in the advertising columns. Here is a weekly paper promising a memoir of me on Saturday, and another weekly paper—an illustrated one—besides a representation of the great scene—announces that it will give an original portrait of the heroine—with a memoir, too, I think.' And May glanced at the paper again to verify the latter supposition.

'My dear child,' said Mrs. Grandison, 'how can you be so insane as to object to these natural demonstrations of public approval? There are crowds of clever people on the stage, who have never made the hit you have, and would give their ears for a tithe of this kind of homage. It is the greatest assurance, I tell you, of the position you hold, and a homage which no lady on the stage would dream of disregarding. The public know me so well by this time that there is no need for anybody to put me in an illustrated paper—except as part of a scene—but I have been through the ordeal, and though it shocked me a little at first, as it does you, I accepted it as a natural incidence in my professional career. And my position, on and off the stage, has always been in the highest degree respectable.'

And here Mrs. Grandison drew

herself up with the air of the injured queen whom it was her delight to render in private life.

'Dear Mrs. Grandison,' implored May, 'do not for an instant suppose that I hold those who accept the career with any disrespect. Only last night, when I was upon the stage, I fancied that I would devote myself to it for the rest of my life. When I am before the audience, I am inspired by my part, and elate as I am with their applause, I think that life can give nothing so glorious. My objection is confined to the time when I am *not* on the stage. I do not like my—what do they call it?—my "private life"—that is to say, I should like to have a different kind of private life—one in which I could be quite separated from the theatre. That, I know, is impossible. An actress off the stage must still be an actress, and I cannot be playing a part from morning till night—I cannot be always *Bianca*, in fact, as I seem to be now.'

'But that feeling will wear off. You will get accustomed—'

'But I don't want it to wear off—I don't want to get accustomed—that is just what I fear. I want my freedom, my obscurity if you please to call it so, as my father's daughter. I don't want to have my "points" canvassed in the papers; I don't want to have memoirs and portraits in the press; I don't want, when I appear in any sort of society, to be *affiché* as Miss Mirabel. All this seems a natural consequence of my position, and what am I to do?'

'Well, there is no accounting for taste,' said Mrs. Grandison, surprised into a free expression of her dramatic sentiments; 'but all this is what people in your—in our position—court as a homage, and, still more, as an advertisement.'

'But this is not all,' returned May, petulantly; 'look at this letter that was left for me at the theatre last night, and that I found on the breakfast-table this morning. My father, fortunately, did not see it, and I did not read it until after he had gone out.'

Mrs. Grandison took the letter, which May threw to her indignantly

across the table, and read it, with a curious air, from beginning to end.

It was an anonymous letter, expressive of the highest admiration for the genius of the actress, and urging the desire of the writer for her personal acquaintance. He was a gentleman of position and importance, he said, and could benefit her greatly in her profession. He would be glad of any recognition of his homage, and in the meantime signed himself with certain initials and gave his address at a post-office.

'I suppose,' said May, with a touch of sarcasm, 'you will think that a recognition of my public position.'

'By no means,' returned Mrs. Grandison, confining herself to the main point. 'But actresses are necessarily exposed to such overtures, and when they receive them there is but one course to take—to take no notice.'

But May was not satisfied; and when Captain Pemberton returned at one o'clock she astonished that gentleman by telling him that she had been considering the question very seriously, and had come to the conclusion, with his permission, not to accept Mr. Mandeville's engagement.

'With my permission!' cried the captain in a transport of delight. 'You have that a hundred times over. Once more you are my own May, whom I had lost for the last three months—and I would rather have one May than a hundred Biancas!'

And he kissed his daughter tenderly in token of her return to him.

'But how comes this sudden resolve?' he asked. 'Your conversion has been a very sudden one, my child.'

May briefly explained her objections to the career, much as she had expressed them to Mrs. Grandison, adding that she should lose all love for the art when she had to make it a business, and that she could never bear the drudgery of constant repetition. 'And Mrs. Grandison tells me,' she added, 'that a successful piece may easily have what she calls a run for five hundred nights. I could never go through such an

ordeal as that—why the thing would become a mere mockery to me in less than a month.'

May suppressed all mention of the note she had received. The knowledge would only give her father pain, and what good could come of it?

'And now that we have settled this question so much to my satisfaction,' said Captain Pemberton, 'I will tell you a piece of news which I can now tell you with real pleasure. Before it embarrassed me, for I knew not how to take advantage of my good fortune. The company in which I am engaged, connected with India, promises to be a success, and it is more than probable that I shall have an opportunity, in another month, of going out to Bengal as the local director. The appointment will be a very profitable one, and I would rather have the money it will bring than ten times the amount earned by you upon the stage. Had you adhered to your original determination I must, I fear, have lost the opportunity; for I could not have taken you with me, and I could not have left you unprotected to play to admiring audiences at the Imperial Theatre.'

May was enchanted at the news—not only as it gave her an assurance that her father would not suffer in his fortunes through her sudden decision, but on account of the prospect before her of a new life in the East.

'I think I shall find as much poetry and romance there as I had expected at the theatre,' she said.

'There is a poetry and romance everywhere for the poetical and romantic,' replied the captain, in a slightly oracular manner; 'and in the East especially so. There you will have a conspicuous part to play in society, with the advantage of being your own heroine.'

'Oh, it will be delightful!' cried May. 'When shall we sail, and shall we not want outfits?'

'You are a little in advance,' remarked the captain, drily; 'I have not got the appointment yet. And there are some rather important things to be done before we take the first step. In the first place I must go

and break the news to Mandeville. I shall have a stormy scene with him, I suspect, and I really think he has a right to consider himself unhandsonely treated. But after all he wants the engagement for his own advantage, not for yours; and if he puts his pecuniary sacrifice very strongly I might be able to offer him something in the way of compensation.'

May was much distressed at this new view of the matter, and reproached herself much for having misled not only her father but the manager, who after all had been a kind friend to her. But having once experienced the mental sense of freedom—for however short a time—she shrank with horror from the idea of riveting the threatened fetters—fetters which, but a few days before, she had regarded as golden links of life!

As for Captain Pemberton, he was too happy in the knowledge of his daughter's decision to care for difficulties which, after all, were mere matters of business, which business people have to go through every day; so he would not hear of May's self-upbraidings, and assured her that any scruples of conscience would be out of place.

'All shall be satisfactorily settled, I promise you,' said he, 'and then we will turn our faces towards the East.'

'And to-night,' replied May, quite reassured, 'I shall go to the theatre and play Bianca for the last time.'

CHAPTER XXVIII

MR. MANDEVILLE FALLS IN HIS OWN ESTIMATION FOR THE FIRST TIME.

Captain Pemberton was not wrong in anticipating a stormy interview with Mr. Mandeville. It was with difficulty that the manager could be brought to believe that Miss Mirabel seriously intended to abandon a career which had begun so brilliantly. He could quite understand people quarrelling with their bread and butter—a low thing fit to be quarrelled with. But to quarrel with gold and precious stones—to quarrel with an income capable of securing a large landed estate—to quarrel

with fame and all the honours that might accrue to it—Mr. Mandeville had never heard of such infatuation. There was only one way in which he could account for the sudden resolve.

'I presume,' said he, 'that Miss Mirabel is about to marry, and it must be a coronet at least that can tempt her to take this premature leave of the stage. If it be so, I can only say that her success has been greater than that of any actress that I ever heard of. Coronets have come to many, but they have come only after a long course of public favour.'

'Mr. Mandeville,' returned the captain, somewhat sternly; 'you mistake altogether my daughter's motives. My daughter has no idea of marrying, or a coronet would not be out of the question in her natural sphere of life. An officer in the British army is a gentleman, Mr. Mandeville, and a duke does not make a *mésalliance*, in the ordinary sense of the term, by marrying into his family.'

'Oh, yes!' said Mr. Mandeville, 'I know all about the honour of the service and so forth; but a poor man is a poor man anywhere, and dukes do not usually marry the daughters of half-pay captains.'

Captain Pemberton reddened with anger at this retort.

'That is a question, sir, that I decline to argue with you. I have my ideas of my own rank, and you have yours. All I wish you to understand is, that Miss Pemberton—that is to say Miss Mirabel—has no wish to make an engagement at your theatre, and that her resolve has my fullest approbation.'

'Well, if you both prefer pride—and I am afraid I must add poverty—'

'Sir,' interrupted Captain Pemberton; 'I will hold no converse with you if you take this tone of disrespect. You are not quite insulting, but you bid fair to become so. And I warn you beforehand that I am not the man to be so treated.'

Mr. Mandeville was a little humbled by this speech; and he fell back upon the commercial view of the question.

'To come to practical matters,' said he, 'what am I to do with my new piece if Miss Mirabel leaves? Look at all the expenses I have incurred for the scenery, and all the rest of it.'

Captain Pemberton was not prepared to enter into this question.

'All I can say,' was his response, 'is, that I shall be happy to meet you in a fair estimate of compensation; but you must remember that the estimate must be calculated upon past expenses. You have no right to draw upon your expectations. There was no bargain made for more than the three nights.'

Pemberton was obliged to bring him to the practical point, and Mandeville saw that he had no position beyond that, capable of being maintained.

'Well,' said he, 'we will talk of compensation hereafter. Meanwhile I must regret that we have not the advantage of Miss Mirabel's services in the new piece; and for these of course, as far as they have gone, no consideration of a pecuniary kind will be given, as none was guaranteed.'

'Make yourself quite happy on that account,' said Pemberton, more contemptuously, perhaps, than was necessary; 'my daughter will not ask a farthing in return for her services, and I have no wish to take any money on her behalf.'

Mr. Mandeville was again repulsed. His legal position was sound, but he would have preferred a little resistance on that score. But what can be done with people who will not accept proffered benefits? He was a man of the world, accustomed to gain advantages over other people by calculating that they were governed by considerations of their own interests. But if people threw their own interests to the winds his policy was of no avail, and so it was in the present case. In his preliminary arrangement with Miss Mirabel he had placed himself in the position of a lady in a poem not much quoted in these days, of whom it is said that,—

'Never having heard of falsehood, she
Had not one word to say of constancy.'

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And never having heard of a successful young actress refusing to gain the benefit of her success, he had never thought of making a provision in his agreement with May, which should bind her to continue on the stage. He was, in fact, a victim of misplaced confidence, and Captain Pemberton gained the better of him at every point.

So at last Mr. Mandeville—with a much smaller opinion of himself than he had ever entertained before—accepted the situation. He had an idea in his head, and was satisfied with the mortification that he supposed it would inflict.

'Very well, Captain Pemberton,' said he, in his coldest of tones; 'since you and Miss Mirabel are determined in the matter, we will say nothing about compensation; but I must play the piece, and I dare say Miss Rosemary will do in the part of *Bianca* as well as anybody else.'

Captain Pemberton would not have cared had one of the dancing-girls introduced into the doge's ball been put into the part of *Bianca*. His only object was to get out of the connection as pleasantly as possible.

So the two parted upon tolerably amicable terms, and Captain Pemberton had the satisfaction of returning to his daughter with the announcement that the matter had been satisfactorily settled.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MISS MIRABEL'S LAST APPEARANCE.—
A GIFT FALLEN FROM THE CLOUDS.

May went to the theatre that night with a light heart. She felt the kind of satisfaction that an emancipated slave is supposed to feel in performing volunteer service. She could face the public with independence, knowing that she was no longer its servant. And her art had again the old glory in her eyes.

At the theatre she was received with the same respect as before. It was known, of course, that there was to be a change of performance on the following evening, the ladies and gentlemen of the company

being called for the performance of a favourite stock piece which never failed to draw, bearing the interesting title of 'The Monkey of Ethiopia; or, the Devoted Wife.' Mr. Mandeville was open to all departments of the drama, and influenced by none, as far as exclusiveness was concerned. His repertory included pieces of every class, and he would even condescend to Shakespeare when that—in his opinion—over-rated dramatist could be made attractive through a new star. The company generally were doubtless not aware that Miss Mirabel was about to retire altogether, or certain ladies among them would probably have given themselves airs of triumph; and Miss Rosemary had evidently not have received the offer of the part of *Bianca*, for her demeanour was not insufferable, as it would have been in such a case.

It transpired, too, that Mr. Mandeville's suggestion in reference to Miss Rosemary was not to be carried out; and I dare say it was put forth only with the amiable object of giving annoyance to Miss Mirabel. Mr. Mole, who was aware of the full extent of the coming change, took an early opportunity of expressing to May his regret at the loss the theatre was about to experience.

'It gave me as much pain as surprise,' he said, 'when Mr. Mandeville told me this afternoon that you are leaving us; and I must confess that I shall feel jealous of the management with which you engage. I conclude of course—though it is no business of mine to ask—that some private misunderstanding with Mr. Mandeville is the cause of your secession. It is a great pity, for Mr. Mandeville would have done wisely to have taken you on your own terms.'

Mr. Mole could not understand a private misunderstanding having reference to any other question than one of money; but May hastened to assure him—she was always very courteous to Mr. Mole, whose friendly attentions entitled him to respect—that she was quite uninfluenced by any such considerations. When Mr. Mole learned

that Miss Mirabel meant to retire from the stage, he was more surprised than ever; and there could be no doubt of the sincerity of his regret from a professional point of view. His experience, however—what a delusive thing experience is!—assured him that a young lady, with such an unmistakable vocation for the stage, would never adhere to a decision of the kind; and he implied this belief by a proffer of future services.

'If ever, my dear madam, you think fit to change your resolution, I hope you will not scruple to apply to me. I shall always be in a position to give you practical advice, and to arrange matters on your behalf which you would probably not care to arrange for yourself. Had I remained in my old, and more independent position, I should have had no hesitation in trying to tempt you even now.'

May assured him that her determination was not likely to be changed; but added, as a recognition of his kindly intentions, that if she ever returned to the stage she would avail herself of his good offices. The gracious announcement made Mr. Mole her friend for life. The idea renewed his enterprising youth, and he saw before him a vision of himself once more doing a grand stroke of business as an *entrepreneur*, with Miss Mirabel to back him up. Had she held out the faintest prospect of changing her mind immediately, he would probably have broken with Mandeville, and surrendered himself once more to the great sea of speculation in which he had already made so many large captures; and it was always a maxim with him in his active days that there were as good fish in the ocean as ever came out of it. The only difference in these days was, that he was not so disposed as formerly to plant himself upon his powers as a fisherman. But with certain inducements he was still disposed to dare; and the inducements in the present case had an element in them which compels capitalists in common with kings. Poor Mr. Mole was in love—that is to say, as much in love as he dared

to be. Not as a sigher, still less as a suitor. His ideal of perfect happiness in this world was to have Miss Mirabel as a daughter, to bring her out in a theatre of his own, and to keep her before the public in a perpetual blaze of triumph.

But May was contented to appear as *Bianca* for the last time. And her last was not the least of her triumphs. Once more was she given up to her character to the exclusion of all thoughts of other things—her home, her independence, her private life which she prized so much. And neither of her previous performances had been marked by more genuine inspiration than came over her at this, the latest, and the close of her career. Again was she summoned before the audience to receive their homage, again and again in all her great scenes. Never was more excitement witnessed in a theatre than when the curtain finally fell, when she gathered up all her flowers—not neglecting the little bouquet between the foot-lights—and gave a parting glance at a scene such as she would behold no more. The audience knew not that they were so soon to lose their new heroine; and the thought, when it presented itself to May at the conclusion, was full of sadness. But she knew by this time that what she felt was only a passing sensation. A minute after, when the lights were lowered and the people hastening away, she was again in the working world of the theatre, and would not have exchanged her freedom for any new triumphs that might be in store. Her father, who was there in close attendance, contributed, perhaps, a little towards this feeling of renunciation; for she was moved almost to tears when Mr. Mole came to her and bade her farewell—in a more solemn way, it must be said, than the occasion demanded. The theatre, he declared, would be desolate without Miss Mirabel, and what was to be said to the audience to explain her departure he knew not. Mr. Mandeville was of course responsible for breaking the news, and he supposed this would be done gently. At present, indeed, ‘Love and Liberty; or, the Daugh-

ter of the Doge,’ would be announced as only temporarily withdrawn; and he presumed that when ‘The Monkey of Ethiopia; or, the Devoted Wife,’ had been exhausted, the enterprising manager would have made his arrangements for reproducing the piece with a new heroine.

‘I have heard it whispered,’ he said quietly to May, ‘that the new heroine is a foreigner; and in that case I can only suppose it to be Madame Montovation, who I believe is eligible for a starring engagement. But I see no chance of a success with her. She has nearly tired out the public with her French accent, which becomes more pronounced every day, and is quite beyond her control. It was liked at first, but there has been a little too much of it; and the peculiarity is such that it must always be provided for in pieces written especially to accommodate the case. And to provide these I fancy the dramatists must be at their wits’ end. Why, in the course of my career I remember every available circumstance being employed for the purpose. At different times Madame Montovation has been the child of English parents brought up in France; the child of French parents brought up in England; a native, successively, of Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark; the offspring of French families settled respectively at Martinique, at Mauritius, at Pondicherry, and at Chandunagore; a child of French parents stolen by gipsies and reared anywhere. No device, in fact, has been neglected to justify her accent to the audience; and now that her accent has ceased to be an attraction I really cannot see much chance of success in making her a noble Venetian lady.’

May thought all these resources rather humorous than otherwise; but Mr. Mole recited them so plaintively, as indicating the small chance of novelty left behind, that May had not the heart to laugh, but gravely assured him that she thought a foreign lady would be very well suited to the part, and sincerely trusted that Madame Montovation would fill her place to everybody’s

satisfaction. But she need not have troubled herself, nor need Mr. Mole have troubled himself either, on the subject. Mr. Mandeville, it afterwards appeared, did not trust to such old material as Madame Montovation. He was in negotiation with a Chinese lady who had learned English at Hong Kong, and could introduce an accent entirely unknown to the British stage; and if that did not satisfy the public, he said, he did not know what would.

And as the event proved, Mr. Mandeville was in the right. There was great disappointment expressed, and some disorderly expressions of opinion which threatened to develop into uproar, when it was found, upon the reproduction of the piece, that the part of *Bianca* would not be sustained by its original representative. But the Chinese lady was at least a novelty; so the intelligent audience being once induced to listen, were soon made to tolerate, and eventually, under the guidance of judicious critics, were brought to admire; and the accent of Pekin was found to be quite near enough to that of Venice to suit the most fastidious tastes. So Mr. Mandeville made money out of the new piece after all.

But I am anticipating matters, and must mention an incident which occurred when May was leaving the theatre on the memorable night of her last performance. Miss Mirabel had entered the carriage with Captain Pemberton, and the two were about to proceed on their way to Brompton, when Leonora, who had been in attendance that evening to assist her mother in taking final charge of *Bianca's* wardrobe, told the coachman to wait while she spoke to the lady inside. She had nothing to say, however, beyond a few words conveying the intimation that a packet, which she put through the window, had been left for Miss Mirabel at the stage door. Before any inquiry could be made on the subject the coachman drove on, and the packet was left in May's hand.

Remembering the letter which had previously reached her by the same route, May did not receive the

packet without some misgivings; but her name on the outside was apparent in the lamplight, and there seemed no reason to object to its reception, even had there been an opportunity to do so. Her father made no remark upon the incident, being occupied with his own thoughts, which had reference to what he called his daughter's deliverance; and if he thought about the matter at all he probably supposed that the packet contained some article which had been ordered for her use at the theatre and had arrived after its time. May had other ideas, and could not help anticipating some kind of embarrassment. But whatever the packet might contain she determined to have no concealment from her father.

Her curiosity was not long kept in suspense. Hired broughams do not go at a very swift pace, but Brompton Row was gained without very exasperating delay; and Captain Pemberton and his daughter, duly admitted by Leonora's small brother, were glad of the shelter of their rooms, and the prospect of the light supper which was laid out for them.

'What is it,' said Captain Pemberton, 'that Moore says'—Moore was one of the few poets that he read, for he was primitive in his reading—'about the pleasures after the bores of the day have all past, in returning to champagne and a chicken at last? The chicken looks very fair, and I am glad to see they have got into the way of giving us *cressons* with it. And we'll have champagne to-night, May, to celebrate your farewell to the stage.'

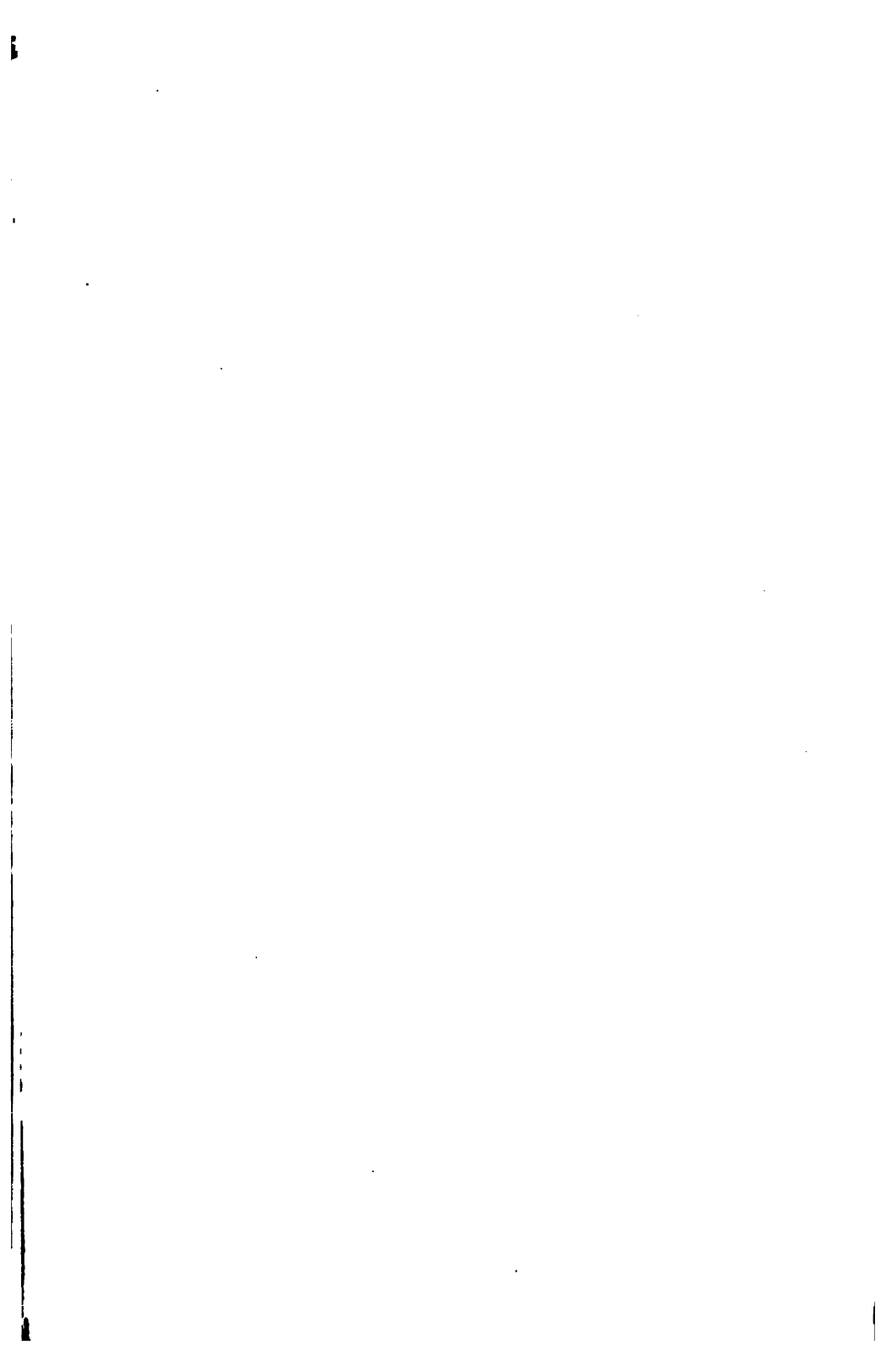
The captain, who was accustomed to attend to himself in his new abode, searched in the cellar for some of his favourite wine, and luckily found a bottle—part of a welcome present, by-the-way, from Sir Norman Halidame. It was not iced, but, as he said, the weather was getting cold enough to make them indifferent to that luxury. And, indeed, as he further observed, 'nothing can be a greater mistake than to ice champagne too much—one kind is just as good, or as bad, as another, if it is made cold enough.'



Drawn by Adelaide Clifton.]

A GIFT FALLEN FROM THE CLOUDS.

(See 'Tribute of Love,' Chapter XXIX.)



You don't taste it at the time—you only *feel* the difference afterwards.'

A profound remark, by-the-way, with which I hope some of my readers at least will be disposed to agree.

May meantime was not thinking of the champagne, but throwing her outer wrappings hastily on the sofa, busied herself in opening the packet which had been left for her at the theatre. Divested of its outer paper it proved to be a morocco case, fastened with a key which hung to it by a piece of ribbon.

'Look, papa,' she said, 'at what has been sent to me to-night! I must open it, I suppose.'

'Certainly,' he returned, pausing in his disquisition upon the icing of champagne. 'But is it not yours?

—if not, why did Leonora give it to you?'

'It was left for me—by somebody—at the theatre—Leonora gave it to me, you remember, just as the carriage was driving off. Open it for me, papa. I can't tell what it means.'

So Captain Pemberton opened the case, and there—reposing in their velvet bed—was a cluster of diamonds. A glance sufficed to show that they represented a necklace, and another glance revealed the fact that the necklace was the one which May had lost at the mayor's ball at Shuttleton.

So Captain Pemberton and his daughter did not want a subject of conversation during supper, beyond that of the temperature of their champagne.

ON THE CROSS OF THE SWORD.

Ballad.

TWO swords and a breastplate there hung in the hall,
True metal and glistening still;
Between knightly old portraits they hung on the wall
Of the old Manor House on the hill.

A youth and a maiden stood under them there,
And talked of the days that are dead;
The youth was a hero, the maiden was fair,
And bright shone her eyes as she said—

'Now reach me that blade that my fingers may feel
The grasp of the heavy hard hilt;
What knight now, I wonder, has carried this steel,
And proved it in battle and tilt?

'He was strong, he was generous, the right was his cause;
One lady he loved—she was fair;
And when he must go to the Palestine wars,
His *fiancée* in her he would swear.

'See here is the cross of the sword where he laid
His hand as he plighted his troth;
For true as his heart was the steel of the blade,
And sacred the cross as his oath.'

'Now stay!' cried the youth; 'for am I not your knight,
And shall I not swear by it too?
I swear by this cross, since you first met my sight
I have loved never maiden but you.

'By the cross that's a type of the cross of our Lord,
And by all other holy things too,'
And he laid both his hands on the cross of the sword,
'I will love never maiden but you.'

LIFE IN THE LATIN QUARTER.

HAVE you ever, when in Paris, taken it into your head to wander beyond that brilliant and alluring quarter wherein is centred the fashion and wealth, the display and dissipation, of the modern Babylon? Have you ever been tempted to withdraw yourself for a while from the allurements of the Paris of to-day—to tear yourself away from among the palaces and the cafés, the theatres and the boulevards, the dazzling shops of the Palais Royal, and the crowded avenues of the Champs Elysées—and to give yourself up for a while to the search of historical relics, or, perhaps being what is vaguely called ‘an observer of human nature,’ to the study of Parisian humanity as it is in the bye-ways—as it is in the dark crooked streets, the crazy labyrinths, the doleful alleys, the huddled-up neighbourhoods of the obscurer faubourgs and quartiers? Paris verily has its two sides—its bright and brilliant side, where Monsieur seems a thoughtless, reckless fellow, in perpetual search of pleasure, the perpetual warrior against *ennui*; and its sombre and plodding side, where Monsieur is habited in a blue blouse and is bare-headed, where his hands are knotted and rough, where he eats his sour bread and hardly less sour grapes as he goes to his work, and where his countenance is rather sinister than playful, his smile rather ominous than reassuring.

Indeed the phases of Parisian life are almost as numerous as the ‘quarters’ themselves. When therefore we speak of Paris and the Parisians, and give such and such a description of the people and the city, we are necessarily confining ourselves to but one phase of it, and that only the phase which strikes us as tourists, as mere outsiders superficially looking on, the most prominently. I propose, however, to give what description I can of certain other and less obtrusive phases, less known to the tourist world, yet which are quite as interesting and even more suggestive

than that most familiarly understood. This great city, playing the part, in these modern days, of Rome in her era of luxurious and reckless empire, governed against its will by a prince who emulates the splendour as well as the absolutism of Augustus, and who, too, would fain boast that he had found the French Rome ‘brick, and left it marble;’ presided over by an *Ædile* whose magnificent projects seem, with whatever gorgeous triumphs, never to find their limit; where wealth is worn on the coat sleeve, its lavishness patent to and dazzling all eyes; in its most external phase ever brilliant, sparkling, chivalric, immoral, fascinating, boastful, ostentatious, vain, impulsive—in a perpetual whirlwind and maelstrom of fashion and gilded folly; the ‘heaven’ of the pleasure-seeker, the adventurous and the purse-proud—a very hell to weak, head-long youth, and headstrong passion; a superb monument of material splendour, and a gilded sepulchre of applauded vice; running the same dashing and reckless race that Rome ran, forgetful of Rome’s fate, only anxious that what the name of Roman once was that of Parisian shall be—this great metropolis holds yet in its bosom the elements of anarchy and revolution, the virtues of sober well-doing and high aspirations, earnest life, toiling life, and even desperate life.

I do not purpose, in this paper, to dwell upon either of the two extremes of Parisian life—either its fashionable and brilliant phase—its life of the Boulevard and the Champs Elysées—or its squalid phase—its life of Montmartre, the Temple, and the Faubourg St. Antoine; but of a phase between the two, possessing characteristics belonging in some degree to both, and a phase as distinctly Parisian as either.

In ‘transpontine’ Paris—to use an old Latinism—there live and thrive certain classes of society, which it is most interesting to observe, and with which it is curious, for a while, to

minge. You emerge from the garden of the Tuileries at its eastern end—nearest the palace—stroll along the spacious quays till you have arrived at the Pont Neuf—the ‘new bridge’ which is many a century old; you cross this, stopping a moment, possibly, to scrutinise the Roman-like countenance of Henry of Navarre, who stares down upon you in time-worn bronze; and at the further end of it find yourself directly under the high building on whose top you may discern the very garret where, towards the close of the last century, a swarthy, fierce-eyed Corsican youth (one M. Napoléon Buonaparte) lodged when he first arrived in Paris as a military student. You stand now upon the border of that mysterious, eccentric, historic quarter, which, for reasons into which we need not just now inquire, is called the ‘Latin Quarter.’ The Latin Quarter may be said to include not only that to which the name is technically confined, but also the Quarter of the University a little to the north of it, the Quarter of the Pantheon further east, and the Quarter Luxembourg, which you reach by going north-westerly. For the Latin Quarter embraces all that region where are scattered the far-famed students’ lodgings, where the student life is found in its true Parisian jollity and its toilsome seriousness, and which has become historic under the general title of ‘over the river,’ or ‘beyond the Seine,’ as the nursery of pestilent young red republicans, the birth-place of many an insurrectionary sally, and the obdurate constituency which hiaes orthodox professors in their lecture-rooms, and sends ‘irreconcilably’ democratic deputies to the Chamber. The Latin Quarter is bounded on one side by the sombre, aristocratic Faubourg St. Germain—that asylum of splendid decay, in whose dingy old edifices is contained the ‘best blood’ of France; where the remnants of the *ancienne noblesse* cuddle together in sympathetic obscurity and contempt of the new ‘powers that be.’ And on the other side, the Latin Quarter stretches out beyond the new Boulevard Sebastopol, and merges into

the dreary districts which border on the Jardin des Plantes.

Strolling through these long, narrow streets, with their high, old-fashioned houses, and their yet narrower and dingier capillaries which branch off at right angles here and there, with many a dark court and narrow arch and crooked alley, you feel at once that you are in one of the most ancient districts of Paris—only less ancient than the snug little island which is still called the ‘Cité,’ where stand Notre Dame, the Palais de Justice, and the gloomy, far-famed Conciergerie. Here, indeed, there is a brisk and various trade; but, seemingly, it is a trade confined to a peculiar, local community. You meet no curious strangers wandering here; all the faces are French, the dresses are amusingly Frenchy, and people go about their business without thinking to lay snares for gullible strangers, or to double their profits by hiring English or German speaking counter-jumpers.

On a fresh June morning, at day-break, we entered Paris for the first time, and were met at the station by an old college mate, who had been living for some months in the French capital. He had taken up his residence in the Latin Quarter, with the double object of being nearer the lectures he was attending, and of seeing that phase of Parisian life which is only to be seen in that vicinity. He had engaged a room for us in the same modest little ‘hotel garni’ which he himself inhabited, and so our first experience of Paris was in this quarter. As we rolled down the broad Boulevard Sebastopol, from the Strasbourg station, the garçons, sleepy, with dishevelled hair, and in their shirt-sleeves, were just yawningly taking down the blinds at the cafés and rolling out the little round tables on the pavement; a few cabs were astir here and there; a market waggon or two, laden with bountiful produce, were rumbling along; a few shop girls were hastening to their work; but the tall houses were mostly silent and shut, appearing,

like their inmates, to be still in the act of slumbering. Paris, in short, was just beginning to yawn after its night's nap, to stretch itself, and to rub its eyes a little. The contrast which 'transpontine' Paris presented to the newer part struck us at once. Here all was already activity and bustle. The shops were open, and customers were crowding in at the doors. The concierges were busily gossiping at the court gates. The restaurants were all alive, and here students were taking their breakfasts at this early hour. The many street traders were astir, hawking their wares on the corners and making their hoarse or shrill voices echo in the court-yards. At last, turning into the modest little byeway which you will find but a few steps from the Pont Neuf, the Rue de Savoie, our cab stopped at the equally-modest Hôtel de Savoie, kept then—and for aught I know, kept still—by one good Madame Godin. The worthy transpontine madame was already at the door to welcome the new arrivals; helped cabby down with the trunks; and with many bows and little polite speeches showed us the way—*au troisième*—to our apartment. Quaint and curious, indeed, was our 'apartment,' as our landlady was pleased to call it, in this musty old house which dated its existence to a time far anterior to the first revolution: a real student's room, redolent of student memories, preserving an air of having witnessed many a student orgy, as well as many a student's toil, burning the midnight oil over his trigonometry and anatomy. Hardly a civilised apartment, indeed, thought we, in some respects; for the floor was simply and purely composed of rough red bricks, which were, truth to say, *very* rough and *very* red, as if perpetually blushing at the sorry appearance they made and the sorry comfort they afforded. In a shabby alcove by the door was—the good hostess certainly called it 'un lit,' but we could give it no higher rank than a cot; and in a closet at its foot was a rickety washstand with its meagre appliances. On the narrow, quaint, and

mustily ornate mantelpiece stood one of those pretty, provoking clocks which never go; and the windows were hid from view by those distressingly suffocating curtains with which the Parisians seem to delight to smother what little light would otherwise struggle in through the panes. The mirror over the mantel was dingy and dim enough; and the bare, yellow-painted walls were hung here and there with such fancy pictures—representing races, dancing saloons, belles of the Prado, boxing matches, and other illustrations of student taste—as madame's generously or carelessly-disposed former lodgers had left behind them. Even in the Parisian June we were damp and cold there; and as for having a fire, that never could have occurred to our hostess in the summer time. Gas we had none, but were fain to content ourselves with very uncertain candles, endowed with a provoking propensity for flickering. For all its discomforts, however, the 'appartement' was kept tolerably clean, and we were served with unwonted promptness by a little grinning garçon, who delighted to such a degree in his shirt-sleeves, that we never once saw him with a coat on during our stay there.

The reader who has been to Paris has doubtless often listened with wonder, if not always with pleasure, to the cries of the 'early birds' who go through the streets at unearthly morning hours, howling, or screeching, or bellowing, or whimpering—as the case may be—announcing in these various tones what wares they have to sell. But the cries one hears in the more central quarters—in the St. Honoré or Chaussée d'Antin quarters—are as the cooing of doves, when we compare them with those which startle you from the profoundest slumber in the Latin Quarter. They come with the dawn—these curious suburban creatures—and the thunders of their approaching invasion may be heard afar off. Your first impression is that of being in a sort of universal lunatic asylum; you might fancy that some

neighbouring menagerie had broke loose, and that the long-caged beasts were exulting, in their own peculiar way, in their sudden liberty. For these people whose voices so rudely crash in upon your dreams, roar as lions and squeak as monkeys, hoot as owls and bray as asses, hiss as serpents and whine as wolves. Astonished at the uproar, you give a bound to the window, throw it up, stretch your neck out, and see—dapper-little women selling cabbage, and big red-faced farmers weighing beans! I have seen the little street of Savoie so full of them, that they, with their little hand-carts, have stretched in a continuous line from one end of it to the other. Fancy this for your first Parisian concert; it is one more startling, if not more harmonious, than Don Giovanni or the Messiah, as you afterwards hear them at the Italiens. And Patti, charm she never so subtly, exhibits no more marvellous vocal miracles than do these vendors of turnips and onions and 'cheap string-beans.' You will perhaps be more indulgent of them when you reflect how hard these poor Latin Quarter costermongers and what not work. These poor little women, with Titanic lungs, have indeed a rough life of it. They live, for the most part, three or four miles outside the city fortifications; these own or rent a modest little patch of land. Here are grown the fruit and vegetables which they hawk in the streets. They must rise long before dawn—and dawn comes early in the long summer days—pack their little carts, and drag them into the town; there for hours they must pull their merchandize through the streets, along square after square, chanting their peculiar refrain, bargaining with this housewife and that, until, late in the afternoon, they trudge back home again with pitifully small earnings, to go through the same tough labour on the morrow, and for many morrows after. What they say when they scream and howl, 'twould puzzle many a Parisian born and bred to answer; luckily the prosperity of their trade does not depend on the public com-

prehension; for these women have long been known by the peculiar intonation of each of their voices, and the housekeepers always knew when Fanchette has arrived with the *Choux de Bruxelles*, and Nan-ninon with the artichokes. Living a week or so in the Latin Quarter, you soon get accustomed—and to what is it not in the power of man to get accustomed?—to these hideous and pandemonian noises; so that you slumber heedless of them, and even, when you get away, miss them, and awake too early for their absence. Indeed, Achille—one of the students with whom I struck up a social cronyship—assured me that these cries were so necessary to his morning's 'second nap,' that when a certain little cherry-faced dame, whom they nicknamed Papillon Mignonne, was taken sick, he missed her voice so sorely that he could not get a wink of sleep after five a.m. for a fortnight. Many a joke or sally do the students have, from their windows *au troisième* and *au quatrième*, with these lusty souls; many a spicy dialogue, full of that *persiflage* and banter which is so unique a species of humour that no language except the French has a word for it, have I heard banded from street to garret by these two species of Parisians—the student and the costermonger—which you see at their best—on 'their native heath,' as one might say—in the Latin Quarter.

The Latin Quarter has its foreign population, too. Not to speak of the German beer-sellers, who congregate here manifold in every square, and whose numbers increase every year—for the French student is beginning to prefer the Bock de Strasbourg and the pretended Bière de Bavière to his old, traditional, and once well-beloved *vin rouge ordinaire*; or of the Italian restaurateurs, who concoct dishes some of which are rarely savoury to the student nostril; or of the myriads of organ-grinders from the same sunny and opera-creating clime; here are also Savoyard chimney sweeps, who probably do more work in these musty old five-story Latin quarter houses than in all the other

Paris' quarters put together; here are Swiss chestnut vendors, who originally plied their trade exclusively in this section of economical merry-makers and roysterers, but who have now branched out all over Paris, and are found on aristocratic as well as scholastic corners, and so need not be further here described as a peculiarity of the quarter we are depicting; here are hundreds of the oddest and closest little shops, which you may pass twenty times a day and yet not notice what they are there for, and yet each of which furnishes some peculiar dish which allures student and grisette customers, just as Cheapside has its famous, modest comers for a chop, a steak, or escaloped oysters, done to perfection. I never shall forget one snug little place in particular, on the Rue Dauphine, where we were often wont to resort. They supplied a huge bowl of fresh milk, and some steaming hot little rolls of a peculiar taste, just from the oven. Here at eleven in the evening—the rolls were never done until eleven—it was no easy matter to get seats at the little wooden tables: for the students, after their evening dance at the Prado or the Grotte des Fleurs d'Afrique, or their night in the amphitheatre of the Opera Comique, flocked thither with their grisettes, for the final treat before seeking their dingy rooms near by. There are other shops where creams and cheeses are the specialty; others where you get macaroni in the Florentine or Neapolitan style at will; others attracting honey lovers; the category would be a long and curious one had I space to pursue it further. And the student, at once hard work and fun lover, at once living wretchedly in a garret and squandering money generously on his 'demoiselle,' enjoys going from one place to another, meeting his cronies and their demoiselles, and passing the time between modest feasting, joking, love-making, and singing.

Would you like to know how we lived at good Madame Godin's? First, the house was nearly full of students thoroughly of the French,

Frenchy; I say nearly, for there were certain other lodgers so characteristic, so singular when found in a student hotel, whom I will speak of presently. There were students 'to the left of us, to the right of us, in front of us,' and in most of the neighbouring houses on either side. So it was quite right that we, being in the very heart and midst of studentdom, should do pretty much as the students did. The scientific promoters of hygiene whose eyes may possibly light on this page, will doubtless be shocked when I say that we invariably had breakfast—that is, *c'est entendre*, our first breakfast—in bed. About nine in the morning, our grinning garçon in shirt-sleeves would knock at our door, and forthwith appear with the following items: a huge round bowl, two-thirds full of hot milk; a Lilliputian jug, the merest baby of a jug, full of thick, black, hot coffee; a large round fresh French roll; a diminutive chop, cooked to death, smothered in pepper and sauce, hidden by herbs; and perhaps three lumps of beet-root sugar. The coffee—and what glorious Java it was, to be sure!—we tipped over into the bowl of milk, and applied the sugar; then we sat up in bed, and thoroughly enjoyed it. About noon, we were expected to take our *déjeuner à la fourchette* at a neighbouring restaurant much frequented by the students. This was down at the further end of a sort of arcade, and was, from the outside, rather forbidding in aspect; but within we were compensated by scrupulous cleanliness, well-cooked dishes, and a refreshing absence of that anxiety to overreach foreign visitors which one too often discovers in that more frequented centre of restaurants, the Palais Royale. We found ourselves here, as everywhere in the Latin Quarter, surrounded by students and grisettes, who seem to make merry on the slightest provocation, and as the merest matter of everyday routine. In truth, the *déjeuner à la fourchette* was with them a very elaborate meal, comprising a bewildering variety of courses and attended with at least a full bottle

of red wine, or a quart of Strasbourg beer, to each one. Pierre, the garçon, who flew to meet us when we made our appearance in the door, would present us with a fancily printed little bill of fare, giving us, not only the *carte du jour*, but also the prices of a *déjeuner* of a more or less limited extent. 'For one franc twenty-five centimes,' it informed us, we could have 'bouillon maigre, a pint of Maçon or Bordeaux à choix, three plates chosen from the meats or vegetables as we pleased, cheese, fruit, and as much bread as was wanted'; for twenty-five centimes more the allowance was yet more liberal, and so on. The students, however, know how to make the most of a trifle, and to be jolly and economical at once. We Anglo-Saxons would order dishes 'for two' to the extent of one breakfast—and thus would pay two complete bills. The Latin Quarter student is far shrewder. Suppose Jacques and his 'demoiselle,' and Henri and his, go to the restaurant, and sit at one of the little square tables together. They by no means order four full breakfasts; their plan of managing is practically co-operative. Jacques informs garçon that two breakfasts only will be wanted; Henri is not supposed to be hungry—wishes nothing; perhaps, though, when the breakfast comes on, he will just have a taste from his companions' dishes. Two soups are brought—for Jacques and his grisette; Jacques pours some of his soup into Henri's plate, and Jacques's grisette does the same for Henri's grisette; there's plenty for all. Then Jacques orders three kinds of meat for his 'three plates at choice,' while his little lady orders three kinds of vegetables for hers. So bountifully helped are they, that these six plates are fully enough to be distributed among the four at table. Bread 'à discretion' fills up the deficiency, if there is any. In like manner the two bottles of wine and two desserts of fruit go all round. When they have finished breakfast, all have had a hearty meal, and each pays his and her share of sixty centimes, or just sixpence, and they go off happy and

content. This is quite the custom with the students, and being so, the landlords never think of objecting to it.

We always dined with Madame Godin at about five o'clock; and then for the first and only time during the day, her guests all met socially together. What a miscellaneous, curious group it was, to be sure! Madame, with her round rosy face and merry black eyes, sat at one end of her modest board; Monsieur Godin, a little, sprightly, shrill-voiced man, whom I afterwards discovered sitting in one of those high boxes in the vestibule of the Grand Opera, acting as an usher to the *parterre*, was at the other; and between the two were two lines of perhaps fifteen guests, as odd a mingling of professions and characters as one could find even in the mosaic society of Paris. There were perhaps ten students, and these were not so very unlike in costume and character; the rest were stranded waifs of Parisian life, washed aside from the great current of active life, finding an obscure haven in this retired quarter where to pass their days. There was old Monsieur Bibot, who had been, Madame assured me, once a well-to-do *commerçant*, who had his hotel in the *Chaussée d'Antin*, kept a carriage, and lived in ease and *insouciance*, ruined by a scapegrace of a son, and an extravagant and unprincipled daughter. The son had been killed in a gambling-house in a drunken quarrel; the daughter had married a seedy man of good family, who had wasted her *dot*, and who in her turn had preyed upon her father until she had quite exhausted his comfortable income—and even now, in the days of his poverty, constantly beset him for money to continue the miserable life of fashion in which she had set out. A meek, mild old man, shabby enough, with a bald head which had but few straggling grey hairs, and who said little, being very respectful and obsequious to every one around him; a sort of butt, too, shameful to say, with one or two of the more rowdy students at his end of the table. I thought of Bal-

zac's 'Père Goriot,' and wondered whether this poor old man's fate would not be as miserable as was his. Near him sat a loud-voiced, demonstrative fellow, all hair, beard, and spectacles, decidedly out at elbows, who described himself as a 'journaliste,' a person not without wit, who said smart things about the Emperor, and was a raving Republican; who gave us a diurnal lecture on 'la liberté,' 'la morale,' 'la révolution,' and other grand abstractions: who ate fast and never seemed to have combed his Hyperion locks. Then there was a little old man with bushy white hair and a thick white moustache, who was for ever regaling us with marvellous plans for making fortunes—an inventor, as he was pleased to call himself; who urged us to come up to his 'laboratory' as he entitled his meagre room in Madame Godin's garret, and on his last and invariably greatest discovery. A fourth, lean, gaunt, cadaverous, was a copyist in the Imperial Library. He seemed to look down on the rest as a set of incorrigible ignoramuses, and to contain in his head an awful amount of learning, which he had absorbed from his life work on all sorts of puzzling old manuscripts. I doubt if there was a table in Paris more endowed with the 'gift of gab;' it was a perfect hurly-burly of talk—of excited, shoulder-shrugging discussion, and not too refined banter, from first to last. As for the *matériel* of Madame's repast, it was, to say the least, plenteous. Her price for the dinner was, if I recollect, one franc fifty centimes, a matter of fifteen pence—and it did sometimes seem as if the dishes would never cease coming upon the table. There were quite as many courses as his Excellency the Ambassador provides for those of his peregrinating fellow-countrymen who attack him with letters of introduction—but, truth to tell, the dishes were of so entirely unwonted a character that we could not speak confidently as to quality. Our little chirping Opera-usher of a landlord, however, did have one very odd custom—odd, I mean, in a landlord; for

every time a new guest came to his house he treated all his lodgers to champagne, the board thereon becoming unusually festive, and the 'journalists,' in particular, uproarious.

With several of the students we were soon, as the saying is, 'hand and glove.' They are by no means an exclusive or supercilious set—are rather flattered than otherwise by being objects of curiosity to *les gentlemen étrangers*. And so we saw much of their inner life, and found out, as we think to this day, a new and curious phase of human idiosyncrasy. They were mostly, as far as pecuniary means went, rather straitened in circumstances; many of them were from the provinces, and were struggling through their professional courses on narrow incomes, eked out by heaven only knows what ingenious devices. One great burly fellow, whose head was covered with numerous thick, bunchy shocks of the very hottest red hair, took me into his confidence, and gave me both his history and his present mode of life. He was, he said, from sunny Auvergne; the son of a poor little schoolmaster, who had scraped and scraped for many a weary year to give his boys a superior education. This one—his eldest—had come up to Paris to study as a surgeon, and it was, during the first year, a rather uphill tug for him. 'But, ma foi, monsieur,' said he, 'by good fortune I had a talent. Voilà,' he added, handing me a portfolio crammed with pieces of thick paper of every possible shape, size, and colour. 'When one has a talent, and is deficient in bread, il faut l'user, n'est ce pas?' The papers were literally crowded with caricatures, humorous faces, 'girls of the period' in outline, street scenes, and comical situations. In short, my red-headed friend was an artist on a modest scale, a caricaturist of no mean genius, and used to be a regular artistic contributor to 'Charivari,' 'Le Journal Amusant,' 'La Vie Parisienne,' and several other illustrated *feuilletons*. What that fellow accomplished in one day was amazing. He attended lectures in

the morning; studied text-books on surgery in the afternoon; danced at the Prado—where he was the very king of the dancers, the gayest, most muscularly enthusiastic, and most adored by the grisettes, of all—till past midnight; went back to Madame Godin's, where, creeping up to his little box of a room in the fifth *étage*, he dashed off a cartoon, by the light of a very shabby tallow candle, before he felt at liberty to throw off his clothes. Thus he combined in the astutest manner self-support, education, and pleasure—as facile in one as in the others, and never being worn out by or tired of either. What a quaint museum of a room was that little garret of his, shut in by the roof, which came bluntly down and cut off the larger part of its front side, leaving scant space for windows, and in consequence of which he could not rise without being in full possession of his presence of mind, the danger of head bumping was so imminent! The floor was carpetless, of course, bare bricks being the softest solace to the feet, excepting that here and there a rude mat relieved their cheerlessness. The walls were simply whitewashed, and that long ago. But the room was nevertheless, somehow, attractive. It was full of the most suggestive odds and ends, giving plentiful hints of the tastes and habits of its occupant. The narrow closet was carefully piled up with bottles, full and empty, of *vin ordinaire*; from the walls hung not only cheap prints, representing the many stars of the ballet and the Prado, famous singers and actors, curiously mixed up with engraved copies from the old masters, and notable historical or classical tableaux, but likewise with quaint *esquisses* of the student's own handiwork, mostly caricature portraits of his friends, and half-finished squibs which he had thought not good enough for the illustrated papers. That he was not deficient in the bump of self-esteem was apparent from the multitude of pomade and scent bottles, powder puffs, stray shirt studs, and other knickknacks and concomitants of the toilet which lay in hopeless confu-

sion on his tables, desks, bureaux, and mantel. There were heaps of books and papers in the several corners, and scattered hopelessly about the floor; an old violin—solace of many a lonely hour—lay in affectionate proximity to his pipes, of all colours and sizes, and his tobacco-pouches of various and unique workmanship. About the fireplace were numerous culinary appliances—notably a black-looking pot, which was a mute Jack-at-all-trades, for in it he boiled his eggs, roasted his coffee, fried his beef, made his soups, mulled his wine, and performed numerous other culinary exploits. He never had a fire in his room excepting when he wanted to cook something; and was wont to sit there, he said, many winter afternoons, scratching with stiff hands on his violin, with frozen breath and shaking limbs. Yet you would perhaps search in vain in the gilded *salons* of the Champs Élysées for a more boisterously happy, a more jollily noisy, or a more thoroughly captivating talker than this red-haired Auvergnat student, a toiler in the college, and a Titan in the dance. His conversation was a perpetual flow of dry, witty, Frenchy sayings, quickness and fitness of repartee, and exuberant high spirits.

One never-to-be-forgotten night he escorted us to his favourite evening haunt, the famous *Closierie des Lilas*. This is situated at the upper end of the Boulevard Sebastopol, quite a distance beyond where the walls of the Luxembourg gardens border upon that really beautiful and imposing thoroughfare. In winter it is neither more nor less than a tightly-closed dancing-hall; but when the genial warmth has come with the latter days of May, one of its longer sides is removed, and now the hall opens upon an ornate little garden, full of shrubbery and shy nooks, lighted, not too brilliantly, with many-coloured Chinese lanterns, and its arbours supplied with seats and tables, whither the dancers, heated by their saltatory exertions, may retire for flirtation and refreshment. It is the favourite place, of all places, for the students and grisettes to gather; and night

after night you may see the same faces there in multitudes, going through the same exciting evolutions as if they never would tire of it. Approaching it at about eight in the evening, on Mondays, Thursdays, and Sundays—for it is only open thrice a week—you would not fail to see the students and their gaily-dressed companions pouring in at the door, and a crowd of the poorer population standing outside, and watching them go in with wistful eyes. You entered by a brilliantly-lighted door, and forthwith found yourself in *queue*, each being obliged to wait his turn to procure his ticket. A paltry franc was the charge of admission for messieurs; the *demoiselles* went in free. Inside it was a very different place from the Jardin Mabille, which has been so frequently described, both as to the hall itself and those who occupied it. It was dazzlingly lighted up. You descended a long, wide staircase: when you reached the bottom, you observed on your left a long, raised box, with palisades, a sort of interior verandah. Here tables and benches were set, and the accommodation was intended for those who preferred to sit eating and drinking, while at the same time having a fine look-out upon the performances below. Opposite the entrance was a little box, where a rosy *grisette* dealt out cigars, wine, and beer, either to the guests themselves or to the sprightly *garçons* to carry to the verandah or to the snug arbours outside in the garden. Enclosed on three sides was the dancing floor; in the centre a raised circular pavilion, where an orchestra, which produced a lively, thumping music by no means despicable, was stationed. The long side behind them was quite open, and introduced you, first to a roofless restaurant crowded with tables, and then to the thickly-shrubbed garden. When we entered the couples had not yet got to dancing, but were gathered chattering or laughing in groups, or performing all sorts of lively antics. The men were evidently nearly all of the poorer student class, the women *grisettes* and shop-girls, but hardly

one who was not dressed in the top of the fashion, the very flashiest of French 'girls of the period.' Finally, the orchestra leader hung a card outside the pavilion, on which one read, '1st danse—Cotillon.' This was the signal for a vast amount of confusion, running, screaming, and squabbling, each couple being ambitious to secure a place on the principal floor. Then the orchestra struck up one of those rollicking, infectious airs which one so seldom hears outside of Paris, and to which it must be that Parisian musicians alone know how to give just the proper twang and sparkle. And what dancing it was that ensued! The couples rushed into it with a whirl and a scamper, forgetting, apparently, the moment the first note struck, everybody and everything in the world in their enthusiasm. The card certainly said 'cotillon.' I had to reassure myself of the fact; but it would have puzzled the most accomplished of our Anglo-Saxon dancers to recognize any of the figures which, under that name, are familiar to us. There was, apparently, neither rhyme nor method in it; it was a rush and a jump and a caper, a shooting out of legs and arms, hair dishevelled dancing about the face, dresses flying horizontal this way and that, hats whirling up to the ceiling and back, shouting and screaming, and a pandemonian noise of thump, thump, thump, thump on the hard floor. The gestures and the postures, the wriggling and the contortions, were so amazing, that I doubt if such a sight is ever seen outside of the Latin Quarter—or a lunatic asylum. The students, many of them, smoked as they danced; and some of the more skilful exhibited gyrations which would have made their fortunes if they had only offered themselves as acrobats at the Cirque de l'Impératrice. As the evening wore on, the dancing seemed to wax fiercer and fiercer, the manners of the dancers to become less and less decorous, and the crowd ever to increase in its numbers. By-and-by a multitude of mere lookers-on had come in, and stood amazed, gazing at some

couple which was making an especial sensation with their energy or skill. All that I can say of the other dances is, that the waltzes and the polkas, the lancers and the mazurkas were as difficult to recognize as was the 'cotillon;' the music was the only link of resemblance; for the rest, the dancers leapt and flew about much as they pleased. While the dancing was going on within, without, in the garden, there were many couples promenading, or seated at the tables quaffing champagne and sipping ice cream. The garçons flew about with their trays loaded down with the good cheer; the demoiselles were chatting gaily, or now and then singing a snatch from Offenbach's operas; students were playing dominoes or picquet at the tables, others walk-

ing up and down and enjoying their cigarettes; and the whole scene, with its contrasts and brilliancy, its excitement and noise, its antics and coquetry, was one not soon to be forgotten by the foreigner from more sober climes. It was after eleven before the orchestra played the final air, and the gendarmes, who had been watching the scene from a corner, lest there should be any disturbance, formed a line, and drove the company before them, like a flock of sheep, downward; and we returned to our lodgings impressed with the fact that we had seen student life on its most reckless and brilliant side, and a side which betrayed them to be, with all their virtues and cleverness, true Frenchmen in morals and love of free and easy gaiety.

GEO. MAKEPEACE TOWLE.

SKETCHES AND EPISODES OF THE LONDON SEASON.

I. HIC ET UBIQUE.

YOUTH the eloquently-epigrammatic writer of 'Lothair,' after gently reproaching the inhabitants of London with the lukewarmness of their appreciation of the beauties of our metropolitan pleasure-grounds, in one of the most delicious passages of one of his most delicious romances, 'Henrietta Temple,' *à propos* of Kensington Gardens, 'In exactly ten minutes it is in the power of every man to free himself from all the tumult of the world; the pangs of love, the throbs of ambition, the wear and tear of play, the recriminatory boudoir, the conspiring club, the rattling hell; and find himself in a sublime sylvan solitude superior to the cedars of Lebanon and inferior only in extent to the chestnut forests of Anatolia. It is Kensington Gardens that is almost the only place that has realized his idea of the forests of Spenser and Ariosto. What a pity that instead of a princess in distress we meet only a nursery maid! But here is the fitting and convenient locality to brood over our thoughts;

to project the great and to achieve the happy. It is here that we should get our speeches by heart, invent our impromptus, muse over the caprices of our mistresses, destroy a Cabinet and save a nation.'

Fortunately it is not necessary to have purposes so heroic or ostentatious as these in view to realise the delights of those Kensington glades in the disposition of whose avenues the princes of the House of Hanover have displayed so graceful a taste. Modern inventions are great levelers and destroyers of natural differences and distinctions. We enter our railway carriage, and before the second cigar is fairly consumed, or our novel or periodical fairly perused, we are brought to the haven where we would be. We telegraph a question to the earth's uttermost limit, and we commence to dress for dinner, and ere we have done due honour to the claret 'which has the flavour of the violet,' there is brought before us the reply. In the same manner we glide insensibly

from season to season, from spring to summer, from summer to autumn. Thanks to this capricious climate of ours, which gives us the sultriness of July at Christmas, and the cold gusts of February in the bonny month of May, atmospheric change is no certain index of the progress in the year which we have made. But the appearance of Kensington Gardens is. 'You complain of your summers,' wrote Horace Walpole. 'I got mine from Newcastle.' 'Tis the only safe plan. We complain of the May through which we have passed: we must import the traditional temperature of May, as we glance upon the tints of delicate green which clothe Kensingtonian trees, from the manufacturers of wrappers, sealskin jackets, and great-coats. The stereotyped Russian count swathed in fleecy costume, and fortified with furs, may approximate in his sensations to those which the month when, according to Milton, 'Zephyr indulged in with Aurora playing, as he met her once a-maying,' ought by rights to impart. We have changed all this. Instead of the gentle breath of Favonius we have the shrill and cutting blasts of Boreas. Above a leaden sky, illumined occasionally by gleams which glisten indeed but do not warm,—brilliant but cold, pleasant to look at but cold to feel, which if they elicit from you, as you watch the effect on the budding trees, the remark to your companion, 'Well, isn't this charming?' prompts the reply, most likely, 'Matter of taste—for my part I don't like my sunshine iced.'

Mr. Frederick Locker has confessed, in some very musical lines, his affection for Piccadilly under all circumstances, and in all weathers, 'sunny or chilly.' It happens to be both sunny and chilly in Kensington Gardens; but whatever influence the combination may have upon your own private sensations, it does not detract from the loveliness of the scene. It is life and the fulness of life, and the chances are that by the time you have reached the corner of Rotten Row you have begun to grow poetical and sigh for the country.

'Greatest mistake in the world,' observes your practical friend, 'the country at this time of year. You can't hunt, and there's no shooting.'

'But you can fish,' you observe, 'and contemplate the beauties of Nature at the same time.'

'Yes,' is the answer; 'I understand—throw a fly, and shiver on the bank, while your hands have no feeling, and your teeth chatter. No, thanks; that's not my line.'

At this period of the year there is usually observable a series of small spasmodic attempts in the columns of certain weekly journals to direct interest to the discussion of the topic why people should choose the town at the precise time when the attractions of the country are greatest; why we should all throng to the chimneypots and streets, when forests and meadows are decking themselves out in the most alluring of their divinely manufactured beauty? To a certain extent the problem has been solved by a poet of society, thus:

- Not less the laughing summer breeze
Sweeps down the Row called Rotten.
Not less the murmuring Hyde Park trees
Their summer garb have gotten,
Than where o'er woods the skylarks soar,
Removed from living creature,
And Nature's beauties are not more
In fields than human nature.
- And if there's poetry in wild
And eremitic places,
There's food for the poetic child
In yonder down-turned faces;
And sparkling eyes and sunny hair:
Have not less inspiration
When seen in populous May Fair
Than rural desolation.'

The solution is true so far as it goes, but it is partial. After the long torpor of the winter, the months of retirement during which our energies have been allowed to lie fallow, and our exhausted systems to recuperate themselves, May is just the month when the first flush of returning life and strength comes upon us in all its sweet force. We pant for action. We have grown wearied of rural ease. Town and town life is a physical necessity. It is only amidst the fortuitous concourse of human atoms held together in the

metropolis, that we can find scope for our energies, and a field for our activity. We enjoy ourselves after our own kind even as the beasts of the field, which have no understanding, enjoy themselves after their kind. You will not see the lamb or the calf select this pleasant month of May for retirement and seclusion amid thickets; on the contrary, these future victims of the carnifical blade rejoice in each other's society, and emulate the example of humanity by assembling themselves together, and plunging headlong into the sweets of miscellaneous companionship. In Mr. Disraeli's language, the months of the London season are precisely those which by a simple physiological law we might have expected men and women to choose for 'contemplating the great and achieving the happy.' If they do not uniformly entertain the intention of the statesman, we may charitably hope that they fulfil his end.

Exactly noon, and we are in 'the Row called Rotten.' Glittering but cold. As our friend has said, 'the sunshine is iced.' But the world—at least a few hundred souls who for the nonce monopolise the title—is abroad and very much astir. Horsemen and horsewomen; pedestrians and pedestriennes; spick-and-span, sleek, prosperous-looking grooms, with glossy hats, and immaculate tops; seedy, disreputable-looking loafers who skulk behind seats and trees; overweening opulence, and threadbare gentility; country cousins and town *habitués*; new faces and old favourites; Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia; signors from Rome, and *monsieurs* from Paris; representatives of legation of every civilised race upon the earth's surface; ponderous squires, who still believe in Conservative reaction, and can't make out what it is the salvation of young men to know in 'Lothair,' rural clergymen, and rural clergymen's wives; horses of every grade of worth and worthlessness; riders of every degree of grace and clumsiness;—each and all of these may you see as you stroll down Rotten

Row this fine May morning. You should take care, though, to have some little acquaintance with the faces—whose name is legion—that you encounter, or to have secured some one as your guide, philosopher, and friend, whom you can trust to fulfil vicariously for you the functions of social omniscience, or you lose at once half the fun of the thing. Ah! there is Dick Uppinall, whom we know of old, at once a perfect study, and complete repertory of fashionable facts in himself—a kind of walking 'Who's Who,' who makes it the business of life to collect every conceivable scrap of gossip that there is floating on the social stream about every conceivable person. If you want to discover who is to be the new beauty of the season, who is already picked out as the great pigeon and the most eligible *parti* by calmly-strategic mammas, Dick is your man. You rally him on the wide range of his exploits and knowledge as a sociologist.

'Pity,' replies Dick, 'if one didn't know something when one's whole life is devoted to gathering from such materials. What with Paris, to begin with, town to follow, the Isle of Wight and Scarborough, with Rome and Vienna to conclude, one is apt to see a good many faces, and to hear a good many things. I have a fairish memory, and this sort of thing occupies in a way, which, though monotonous, is not disagreeable, to what I am pleased to call my mind.'

Mr. Uppinall rather likes to play the part of Cicerone, and he will do so to perfection.

'Curious thing how that fellow manages to pull on as he does,' remarks our friend, pointing to a very nattily-dressed gentleman, on a particularly neat horse. 'To my certain knowledge, he was quite smashed up at Doncaster. Still he seems not merely determined, but able to carry into practice his family motto, which, I am told, is *Resurgum*. He is a sort of phoenix—always rising up from his what-you-may-call-it.' With which appropriate, though somewhat vague figure, Mr. Uppinall directs your attention to some other

member of the crowd. And there are other social phoenixes, and sphinxes too, for the matter of that, met together here to-day. Marvellous is the virtue, and most miraculous the efficacy of the long vacation. You retire from the metropolis for six months, and somehow or other, at the expiration of the time, you return to your native Park, Piccadilly, Pall Mall, full of health and spirits, and replenished with resources, whence got nobody knows, and most certainly nobody cares, which will enable you to carry on the campaign for another season, thus distinctly falsifying, and directly giving the reply to the vaticinations of those gloomy prophets of evil who, not a year since, anticipated with such glee, and were charitable enough neither to disguise their anticipations nor the joy which accompanied them, 'that you would never be able to show up again.'

'Admirably done! By Jove! what imperturbable coolness and cleverness, too, women have,' murmurs your Mentor. 'Look there—that's Mrs. Minto. You know who she was? Clara Trevor; and you see whom she's just passed, and given that very graceful bow to? Why, that's Kit Mantle, who was so fatally smitten with her last year. You know there was an engagement, and people said there would be a match. Can't say I believed it. Mrs. Trevor is not frequently known to nap. Well, young Minto, son of the colonial broker, came upon the stage. They say he has twelve thousand a year. Don't believe it; but at any rate he has more, as he may easily have, than Kit, who of course received his *congé* from the Trevor. Well, I believe there was no end of a scene. Kit vowed he would kill Minto, and when he didn't do that, went in some fellow's yacht, broken-hearted, to Norway. The false fair was cut up, too; for there's no doubt about it, she liked Kit, and only took Minto under strong parental pressure. I saw Kit colour and look very queer just now before she passed him; but madame was more than equal to the occasion. You saw the bow she gave him?

Had they but met only once before, and that at a drum or ball last night, nothing could be utterly more *insouciant*. And yet Kit used to rave about the immutability of love, and swear that he had found a true woman's heart at last. I should very much like to know what a true woman means. A keen eye for diamonds, and very little sentiment in the region of the heart—that's about my idea, and, I flatter myself, a pretty correct one.'

It is unnecessary to enter into any dissertation as to the accuracy of the notions of so unimpeachable an authority as Mr. Uppinal on the subject of so-called affairs of heart. But there are faces in the crowd to-day which constitute most emphatic contradictions to the stereotyped views of the professed cynic. There are few more captivating sights on this earth than that of a genuine English girl on horseback, well mounted, neatly clad, and a good rider. Such there are here to-day in abundance—maidens new to London, fresh from their native pastures, but perfect mistresses of their quadrupeds. There is a flush of conscious virgin triumph on their fair cheeks. It is their first season, and they feel already that it will be a success. Others, too, you may note to whom the saddle is a far less congenial situation. You may meet them to-night at Lady Tyghtsfytte's or elsewhere, and they will talk to you of the delights of the Row in the intervals of the dance; but could you elicit from them the honest truth, they would confess it was an ordeal of discomfort, submitted to merely because it was the correct thing to do.

There is another feature in this human show well worth noticing and suggestive of one or two reflections. We don't allude to the groups of well-dressed young gentlemen with showy buttonhole bouquets, and with a confirmed habit of lounging across the rails, and in a by no means *sotto-voce* tone passing their remarks and criticisms on the equestrians and equestriennes who catch their eye; nor to the flirtations, incipient or continued 'from our last,' which abound; nor

to the attempts, whether successful or failures, made by enamoured swains on horseback, in divers wily manners, to wheel round their steeds, so as to face, with a subtle air of fortuitousness, the quadruped whose happy luck it is to bear the elegant burden of their charmer; nor to the curious and significant glances which the proudest and most high-born of our demoiselles will direct to her whom they learn to be the *Lais* or *Phryne* of the hour. For the moment we are specially struck with the conspicuous part which children take in the exhibition. Was there ever a time at which infants of ten and eleven years of age were so surprisingly knowing as they are now—ever a time at which the blue-eyed little lass who has not yet emerged from the nursery, and who has years to wait ere she is free from the discipline of the governess, was so precociously initiated into the mysteries of the great world? As we stroll onwards we meet urchin after urchin led by the hand of juvenile mammas, with ostentatious solicitude and affection. The child of the period is something like the doll of the period—a gorgeously-overdressed little creature. What does it mean? Does this exceptional and scrupulous attention to the infant toilet argue a corresponding amount of interest in its welfare, or is it done, as Mr. Uppinall rudely suggests, ‘simply for effect?’ A certain order of young ladies are very fond, in the present day, of taking as their perpetual companions infinitesimally tiny dogs. Is the companionship of small children, conspicuously paraded, simply the expression of a taste which is generically identical? For ourselves, we must confess that we fail to recognise in the social phenomenon of the times—and a phenomenon it undoubtedly is—anything particularly agreeable. Do the mammas who pay such attention to their progeny, and display them to the external world in such gaudy attire, carry the same scrupulous care into the province of domestic life? These little ones who are attired like dolls—is the treatment accorded them very different from that given to

those delicate puppets of wood or wax which seem to animate the windows of the Burlington Arcade?

Tableau number three: Scene, let us say the club-window; but as for which particular window, and which particular club, these are points on which we must preserve a discreet and inviolable silence. The club-men of London are a sensitive race of beings, and they love to cherish the idea that the joint-stock palaces which are their habitations are perfect shrines of secrecy. In an ordinary way the average Briton will bear caricaturing to any extent. In fact, he rather likes it than otherwise. You may depict his harmless little eccentricities as accurately and as grotesquely as you wish, provided you limit the scene of their display to the house which is said to be his castle. You may describe his wife as an over-dressed vulgarian, and his olive-branches as ubiquitous nuisances, and he will not, in a usual way, think you have taken any very unjustifiable liberty. But once depict him in print, or speak of him in conversation, as he seems and is at his club, and he will open upon you a perfect avalanche of vituperation. You are a spy, a gazer through keyholes, an eaves-dropper, an unprincipled purveyor of tittle-tattle, and what else it is hard to say. Passionless and even lethargic on most subjects, this is a point on which he waxes eloquent. Satirize his home-life as you please, desecrate the gods of his hearth if you will, but spare his club. This is his retreat—absolutely sacrosanct in his opinion: this is his social superstition, from whose chains no amount of argument will avail to liberate him. Laugh at his domestic existence by all means; his Penates will forgive your sneers; but there must be no trifling with his club. As for what goes on inside its walls, these are mysteries which he considers it sheer outrage and blasphemy to divulge. Horace, who has anticipated most phases and sentiments of nineteenth-century life, has embodied, in language superlatively exquisite and concise, this vague and curious feeling on the part of club men:—

'Est et fideli tuta silentio
 Merces: vetabo qui Cereris a crum
 Vulgarit arcanæ sub isdem
 Sit trahibus fragilemve mecum
 Solvat phaselon.'

Warned by this metrical admonition, we are not going to initiate our readers into the rites which are celebrated in the smoking-rooms of St. James's, or to attempt to reproduce the startlingly-brilliant utterances, pregnant, of course, with profound secrets of incalculable moment, which the typical club-man wishes the outside world to believe form the current sort of gossip inside the mansions of Pall Mall. We simply take our stand at a certain club-window now, because it offers a favourable vantage-ground for watching the flood-tide of existence as it flows up and down the thoroughfare in front of us. St. James's Street is a pleasant place enough for a lounge between the hours of four and five of an afternoon in the season. As you discuss the benighted wayfarers who pass beneath your eyes, the chances are that you will find more things and more objects than one to remind you that you are not so young as you once were.

'It's a curious thing,' remarks a contemplative philosopher, after an absence of two or three years from the metropolis, situated in such a locality as we describe, 'but instead of knowing every one now, I find that I did know every one's father.'

'Gad,' is the reply of a social sage of more senior standing still, 'wait a little longer, my boy, and you will find, like me, that you know every one's grandfather.'

This life at the club-window represents to no inconsiderable portion of metropolitan humanity the only solution at which they have as yet arrived of the problem of existence. Carriage after carriage sweeps by; they will tell you who each individual occupant is, and what are her or his antecedents. A venerable gentleman hobbles across the street, and his whole career is reviewed in a series of amusing anecdotes. A youthful Phaethon dashes by in a well-horsed equipage, and you have the story of an exciting elopement, the hero an impecunious but attractive scapegrace, the bride

almost a millionaire in her own right. A pedestrian, apparently a gentleman, whose age does not exceed forty summers, saunters along easily, and your companion, himself a personage scarcely in the heyday of boyhood, says—

'I wonder whether Juventus Mundi will ever grow old. I can remember him twenty years back, and then he was scarcely youthful; but there he is as fresh as ever, considerably younger in appearance than either you or I are.'

'Ah! there are the Carmarthen girls, and my lady languid-looking as ever, but vigilant in reality with a vengeance. I should like to have a chat with them. I rather think I shall go into the Park.' And our friend strolls off, and perhaps we may as well follow him.

We move closely but slowly, but there is more than enough food for meditation amply to compensate us for our peripatetic delay. An old gentleman in a vehicle of antique appearance, partly consisting of wickerwork, drives past, his hat somewhat on one side, and an extremely substantial and lengthy cigar issuing from his mouth. *Cruda deo viridisque senectus*. He is the Earl of Longcourre, and has not been known to miss an afternoon in the Park during the season so far back as living memory can reach. Next in the line, driving a species of carriage known as a Victoria, horsed with a beautiful pair of Iceland ponies, comes a fair creature whose robes, with their exquisite fit, are a living testimony to the unrivalled skill of Mrs. Warton. Who is she? O the pity of it! Daughters scrutinise her curiously, mammas turn their heads the other way and complain that it is cold. There, driving in the almost exploded cabriolet, is Mr. Bigger, erect, complacent, and radiant as ever. Who is Mr. Bigger? A gentleman who has made his fortune by the manufacture of india-rubber bands, and is now very successfully working his way into society, for Mr. Bigger is unmarried, has been taken up by a few political magnates, and the manufacture of india-rubber bands is not a sort of business to be sneezed at. That

lady there, who is bowed to right and left, and who gracefully returns the compliment, do you recognise her? No? Why, she gives the best dinner-parties in London, and has the most model mansion which Park Lane can boast. The Duke of Gatherum, it is said, made her the offer of his heart and hand last season; but just as Cæsar refused the diadem of imperial Rome, so did Mrs. Delaney decline the ducal honour. A gentleman on foot brushes past us, conspicuous for his careless dress and shaggy hair. 'Only a man with twenty thousand a year,' whispers some one to you, 'can afford to go about like that.' Your same informant will probably tell you that the nobleman in question sat for the portrait of Lord St. Aldegonde in the ex-Premier's novel of 'Lothair.' It is said that the heart of this listless *negligé* peer is fairly captivated by the piquant Mrs. Delaney. The Countess of Blank, with her auburn-haired daughters, a well-known money-lender with particularly Hebraic nasal development, who drives a two-hundred guinea cab, Mrs. Fitz-Jones, the wife of the great colonial broker, with her beautiful daughter; the Hon. Mrs. Claremont, who was once a nursery-maid, then a governess, and who is now as much coveted as any woman in London—such is the worth of a face pretty but not beautiful, and a cool, far-sighted mind—the wife of a colonial bishop, who is trembling on the verge of bankruptcy, a successful actor, the greatest portrait-painter of the age—if you look you will detect all these celebrities in the motley crowd before you. You miss some of the well-known faces of a twelvemonth since. Somehow or other they have vanished, where nobody knows, nor does any one care whence the new ones who take their places have sprung.

Fashion is a fickle goddess. There still exists, we believe, and is doubtless accepted by some as inspired with the soul of infallible veracity, a song defective in rhyme and mendacious in sentiment, which asserts that the Zoological Gardens on Sunday afternoon are the 'correct

thing.' *Troja fuit*, and the glories of 'the Zoo' are things of last year. In 1870 they have changed all this. The Botanical is tolerable; but desultory strolls and casual calls on friends seem to suit in a special manner the capricious mood of society at the commencement of the season of 1870, and so to have superseded 'the Zoo.' From the Botanical to the Horticultural Gardens the transition is natural enough; in the same way we may easily pass from the locality in which flowers grow to that in which they are sold. It is a study to notice the youth of the period engaged in the serious work of selecting bouquets for their respective buttonholes, and an imposing sight to witness the scrupulous care with which ensigns in line regiments choose and purchase floral decorations whose cost somewhat exceeds half their day's pay. However, that young gentleman yonder who has just entered the premises has by no means come for selfish purposes alone. He fixes upon a bouquet of overwhelming proportions, composed of choice hothouse plants, and then, the transaction concluded, gives the vendor an address whither to send it—Miss Fitz-Campian of the Thesæum Theatre. Our friend entertains an idolatrous passion for this charming actress. It is the great satisfaction of his life to despatch to her such gifts as these. But Miss Fitz-Campian is the recipient of a good many more donations of a precisely similar description. It will be duly delivered to her at the stage-door; she will smile at the tribute of adoration from her fond swain, and in all probability display her appreciation of its worth and her generosity of nature by presenting it in turn to a sister artiste, who is less favoured in these matters, with an air of self-satisfied pride and very complacent liberality. Studies at the florists are not the least suggestive to the observant and meditative mind of those which the season affords. Sketches at the Academy, with the episode of one of Sergeant Parsons' famous Richmond dinners, we must leave for another occasion.

THE GREAT EXODUS OF THE YEAR 187—.

A Chapter from English History.

BY LORD MACAULAY'S NEW ZEALANDER.

* * * * *

THE state of the country became such that the people lost all patience. It was evident that a crisis had arrived, and that a great change was impending. There were two principal sources of difficulty and discontent, of which the first was Ireland.

The condition of that unhappy land grew worse and worse with every attempt to amend it. The abolition of the Church Establishment failed to satisfy one party and made avowed enemies of the other. The settlement of the Land Question produced a similar effect. The landlords took up arms and the tenants took down theirs—having been always well provided in this particular—and prepared for serious fighting. But this arrangement did not please some of the leaders of the people. One of these, at a monster open-air meeting occupying the greater part of Tipperary, candidly said that potting from behind hedges was all very well, but he objected to the field upon principle. He went on to say that when people fought upon equal terms the result to be anticipated was that suggested by the historical precedent of the Kilkenny cats. To wage open warfare against one another was to divert hostility from its legitimate channel; it would be far more sensible to unite their forces against the common enemy, who had left them no legitimate cause for agitation, and so deprived the Green Isle of its most cherished birthright. For what to them, he asked, were their altars, their liberties, their hearths and homes, compared with the privilege of getting up a row about them?

The sentiment was echoed throughout the peopled miles occupied by the meeting. It found a response in every Irish heart; and every Irish voice lent its echo of approbation. The solution of the difficulty had at last been found. A

resolution embodying the opinions of the speaker was carried unanimously, and the speaker himself was carried unanimously—upon the shoulders of the assembly—in a proud march of triumph.

The news was spread through Ireland with a celerity compared with which wildfire is a sluggish process of combustion. The idea was everywhere declared to be the *Deus ex machina* of the difficulty. So generally was it appreciated that the opponents upon the church question at once adopted it. The very colours of the combatants were united in the common cause. Orange and blue were worn in combination upon hats and hearts; and the 'wearing of the green' became general as a symbol of common nationality. Even party music was made to 'mingle in peace' like the waters at Avoca; and a patriotic composer produced a joint air, pleasingly compounded of 'Boyne Water' and 'Croppies lie down.' Among the outward signs of the times nothing was more common than to see the Catholic Cardinal and the Protestant Archbishop walking down Sackville Street together, or partaking in common, at a shop in Grafton Street, of the delicious Dublin pastry; while in the agricultural districts—that is to say nearly everywhere in Ireland—the landlords and tenants partook of mutual whisky; the peasants living in the hearts of the proprietors, and, we need scarcely say, paying no rent.

The next proposition was to send for the French; and a deputation, consisting of three gentlemen with shillelahs, and circular notes issued by Messrs. Kinahan, was despatched to Paris to invite them. But the French could not come, having quite enough to do in looking after their own affairs; for M. de Rochefort was by this time the head of the government, and was abolishing everything right and left. So

another proposition was to send for the Americans. The same deputation, supplied this time with a precautionary case of soda water, was accordingly sent to New York. The Americans could come of course; but before deciding to do so the President 'envoyed' a reporter of 'The New York Herald' to London. The reporter, in compliance with previous instructions, called upon the Queen at Windsor, and 'interviewed' her Majesty, with the view of ascertaining the nature of that illustrious lady's intentions in the matter. The Queen was very gracious; but the result of the conversation, as reported verbatim in the 'Herald' next morning (favoured by the Atlantic Telegraph, and cabled back by their own correspondents in time for the London papers on the morning following), was that no definite answer could be returned until the Queen had consulted her ministers and her ministers had consulted Parliament. So the reporter—after improving the occasion of his visit to this country by suggesting some useful reforms in the manufacture of cocktails—betook himself back to New York, where he happily arrived just in time for a sensation fire, a free fight, and an elopement at Saratoga Springs.

The subject was of course debated in the English Parliament. But though everybody talked, nobody could bring forward a practical proposition with regard to it. The ministry resigned to avoid the responsibility; but the Opposition was too clever to accept it, so ministers had to remain. There was another grievance, too, pressing itself upon public attention at the time, which many thought more difficult to bear than even Ireland. This was the English climate. It had been getting worse and worse for years, and at last became unbearable. The sun had been scarcely seen for months; and it became necessary to light up the streets, the shops, and even the private houses, at two o'clock every day. The weather was always bad, and whenever it changed—which was about three times a week—the

change always seemed to be for the worse. On Monday there would be a fall of snow three feet deep on the ground, accompanied by a north-east wind; there was ice everywhere, even the river being frozen. By about Wednesday there was a rapid thaw, so that the damp penetrated even to people's bones. On Friday or Saturday tropical heat would set in, with, however, very little sun, and the inhabitants had to rush into the lightest of light clothing. Even these excessive changes came in no regular succession—the temperature always took the very turn least expected. There was immense suffering, as may be supposed, particularly among the poor. In the legislative chambers the effects were worse than elsewhere, owing to the artificial means used for their mitigation. The atmosphere varied between that of a nor-wester and a sirocco; and members were at one time in the evening sitting in great-coats and flannels—at another time denuding themselves to their shirt-sleeves. Order was almost completely set aside: when Mr. Speaker rose to enforce it he was usually blown back into his chair. The leaders of the Government and the Opposition had frequently to employ speaking-trumpets in order to make their opinions known in the body of the House. For the hot intervals punkahs were provided, on the suggestion of Colonel Sykes, who always took such opportunities for the ventilation of Indian grievances. Petitions from all parts of the country were presented against the heat, the cold, or the mugginess, as the case might be; it being considered that Government ought to do something in the matter by scientific means, and debates were endless with regard to it. Between Ireland and the weather, in fact, the Legislature had no peace. How were the two troubles to be averted? The question was constantly asked, but never answered.

At last Mr. Bernal Osborne—who had, after a great deal of trouble and delay, been elected by a facetious constituency—made one of his jocular speeches upon the double

difficulty, and said that in order to get rid of Ireland and the climate together, they had better all emigrate. The House laughed; but Mr. Bright, who saw in his mind's eye another great 'English speaking' Republic, rose in his most massive manner, and declared that the idea was sound and practical, and that he hoped to see it entertained by hon. members. Mr. Bright's speech made a marked impression, and hon. members began to think the notion not so absurd after all. A long debate ensued, in which the practicabilities were discussed. Mr. Osborne—who had not meant anything at all—explained that by 'us all' he had meant the nation generally; and he said that he really did not see why the thing should not be done; adding, that of course the Queen and Constitution, Lords and Commons, and our institutions generally, should go also—'otherwise,' he remarked, in his humorous way, 'we shall have nothing to change when we get to the new country.'

The debate lasted until far in the morning, objections being made and met in a most industrious manner. The proposition received the support equally of the Ministry and the Opposition. Mr. Gladstone saw no less than five courses before him, any of which would take him to Australia—the great land fixed upon by common consent. Mr. Dieracli was quite contented with either of the five, so that it was sufficient for the purpose. Mr. Lowe was at first a little staggered, and did not half like the idea of going back again, but remembering the enormous resources of the country for purposes of taxation, he grew delighted at the idea. Mr. Newdegate, satisfied that the Constitution was to be included, said that he saw the finger of Providence in the notion. But it is not necessary to follow the remarks of the different speakers. The debate took a really practical turn in consequence of a remark made by Mr. Bruce—that he hoped the London cabs would not be left behind. This led to a discussion as to the transportation of solid objects, as a

great number of ships would naturally be wanted for the population. It was the general opinion that only a selection of these should be taken. The Great Seal, the journals of both Houses, and a copy of Hansard would, it was explained, go with the crown and royal insignia as part of the Constitution. Mr. Beresford Hope pleaded that the National Gallery should not be left behind—he meant of course the contents, as nobody would be likely to want the building. Mr. Ayrton thought that they would not want to take any buildings whatever; and Sir Robert Peel did not see how they were to do it if they tried. But an hon. member in the engineering interest declared that the Marble Arch having been moved from Buckingham Palace to Cumberland Gate, anything of the kind could be done—it was only a matter of time and money. It appeared to be the general opinion that the best buildings should be taken and the remainder left behind. 'We won't take the Nelson Column,' said Mr. Osborne, 'and I vote that we forget all the statues by accident.' The House roared with laughter at this ready wit, and ultimately referred the whole question to a Select Committee.

The Select Committee made a report to the House in due time, and greatly in favour of the scheme. The announcement was received with acclamation by the nation; and Parliament then proceeded to the necessary debating. The National Emigration (England and Scotland) Bill passed both Houses with very little debating, and the Royal Assent being given, the most active measures were taken to put it in force. At every port in the country ship-building was begun with such vigour as had never been seen before, and the amount of employment obtained by the means—for everybody who possibly could turned their hands to the work—made the people so prosperous that there was not a pauper to be found by the time the last ship was finished. Some branches of commerce were of course deranged for a time; and there was considerable

confusion about Bank rates, the currency, and so forth. But these matters soon arranged themselves, as they always do. As Mr. Bright remarked, the country is only one large shop, and if you can move a small business you can move a large one. The movement was certainly managed very well; and every week saw a large fleet sail from one or other of the ports, containing half a million or so of the population. The number of the latter, however, was considerably increased by emigration from Ireland; for full permission was given to non-agitators in that country to share the fortunes of their English and Scotch brethren.

As might be expected, there was some disagreement as to the selection of buildings for removal. Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's were generally agreed to; and they were taken to pieces stone by stone, and had a little fleet to themselves. Nor was much difficulty made about the national collections—pictures, books, &c. — though Mr. Ayrton thought the opportunity a good one for getting rid of them. Lord John Manners, Mr. Beresford Hope, and others, however, were too strong for him. Only one or two of the statues were taken, and among these the one in Leicester Square was not included. There was a great battle about the Brompton Boilers, which Mr. Cole was of opinion could not be dispensed with. But public opinion, backed up by the comic papers, was too much for that enthusiastic gentleman, and, divested of their contents, it was peremptorily resolved that they should remain where they were. It was curious to notice, by-the-way, the manner in which the press made capital out of the national movement. There were but few books written or published, but the periodicals were in full force. The comic journals caricatured and generally ridiculed the proceedings to the last. The serious pictorial papers published cuts of everything that was to be seen no more and was at all worth remembering. The weekly reviews were as sententious and biting as ever; and the dailies had sensation leaders

and sensible suggestions by turns upon every fresh operation. The monthlies and quarterlies also performed their share of the general enlightenment, and always found something fresh to describe or dilate upon. Of course the proprietors of these periodicals were getting their houses in order for removal all this time; for they had not the smallest intention of stopping, merely because the nation underwent a change of residence.

Some of the more satirical or malicious organs of the press delighted at this period in suggesting the omission of classes or individuals obnoxious to them, from the impending arrangements. 'Now is the time to get rid of the peers,' said one; 'Leave the bishops behind,' said another. In similar spirit they made hits—or misses—at unpopular legislators, actors, authors, or other public men; but on the whole the press conducted itself very well.

One of the hottest debates in the Commons was upon the subject of the building in which the members were assembled. It had been forgotten somehow until nearly every question of the kind had been settled. There was a strong party—led, as usual, by Mr. Ayrton—for leaving it where it was and letting it be sold with the rest of the unavailable property; but Mr. Beresford Hope and the majority of the two Houses ruled otherwise; so it was agreed that the Westminster Palace should be among the honoured edifices, with the proviso—advocated particularly by Lord Elcho—that upon being rebuilt the House of Commons should be made to hold its members.

Up to the last day, almost, questions of detail, which had been overlooked, forced themselves upon public attention. The workhouses were empty, owing to the immense demand for labour, but the prisons were full, and it was suggested to ministers that something must be done with their contents. 'Keep them where they are,' said Mr. Osborne in his usual vigorous style, 'and make the country a penal settlement.' This was hailed by many

as a good idea, and would perhaps have been seriously entertained but for Mr. Disraeli, who demolished it in an effectual manner. Repeating his memorable dictum that England is an Asiatic rather than a European power, he showed that next to getting rid of Ireland and the climate, the great advantage which the intended movement would give to the country would be its isolation from the politics of the Continent. Once in Australia, we should interfere with nobody, and nobody would interfere with us. We might disband the greater part of our forces. If we kept England as a penal settlement we must station troops to defend it, and might find ourselves at war with one country or another almost at any moment. There was no answering this, so the idea was abandoned. Ultimately it was determined to take the prisoners with the rest of the population, retaining only a few of the most serious offenders in confinement, and setting the rest at liberty under the surveillance of the police. The Fenian prisoners, including the ex-member for Tipperary, it was wisely agreed, might receive a free pardon and be returned to the bosom of their affectionate friends in Ireland.

This was among the final arrangements for the great Exodus of the British nation which caused such astonishment in Europe. The great body of the population were, as we have seen, transported by degrees, and remained under the colonial government until the arrival of the imperial authority. The army—by this time reduced to a comparatively small force—were easily dealt with, as troops are always able to move on short notice. And at last came the day when her Majesty, with the rest of the Royal Family, the Crown and Royal Insignia (including such material 'properties' as the throne and the stone chair), the Great Seal, the Lords and Commons, the Votes and Orders of the two Houses, the copy of Hansard, and all the other materials of the Constitution, went on board ships-of-war anchored off Dover. Four ships sufficed to carry both the

personnel and the material; and placed conspicuously in the prow of each was one of Landseer's lions from Trafalgar Square—which even Mr. Ayrton did not ask to be included in the condemnation of the column. It was a great day for England—for the nation at least—when the little fleet, with its large escort of troop-ships, was ready to sail. Everything was ready, when a sudden idea struck an intelligent peer—What should he do without the landed property he was leaving behind him? His tenants had paid up to date; but what about future payments? It was an awkward question; but it was, fortunately, found that every other intelligent peer—or unintelligent peer, as the case may be—and all the other landowners, had omitted to take this question into consideration. They could not take their land with them, that was clear, and it would be worth nothing to sell under the circumstances. The Crown lawyers might surely have foreseen this dilemma, and they probably did: but it is not the business of Crown or any other lawyers to give opinions before they are asked, so they said nothing on the subject. 'We were fools to pass the bill so easily as we did!' was the exclamation on all sides. But the business in hand was how to supply the omission.

There was nothing for it but to improvise a sitting of the two chambers on board two of the ships. The saloon of each was smaller even than the House of Commons in the then packed-up Palace of Westminster, so but few members could take part in the proceedings. However, the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker were both at hand; the Lords can legislate with as small a number as they please, and the Commons managed to get considerably more than a quorum in their chamber. So the two Houses met in the two ships, the Landseer lions at the prows with appropriate dignity, and the result may be soon told. A short bill was drawn up guaranteeing to all landowners in England an equivalent in value for their

English land in Australian soil, details being reserved for subsequent adjustment. The Bill (known to subsequent legislation as the Landed Property Compensation Bill, extending to the three kingdoms, a great deal of Irish property being concerned) was passed by the Commons in about ten minutes, and by the Lords in about five. So this momentous matter was settled at the last moment, to the common satisfaction of all concerned. They were not aware at the time that the agricultural interest in Australia, living on their own lands, are called 'squatters;' but the intelligence was broken to them gently during the voyage, and after their arrival they found themselves ready to be reconciled to a great many conditions of life hitherto undreamed of in their philosophy.

This was the last hitch. A little incident that followed tended only to enliven the scene—and the scene, we should not omit to add, was a remarkable one. Shakspeare's Cliff was placarded with bills announcing 'This Island to be sold or let, inquire of Messrs. — and —,' the auctioneers left to conduct the business; and with other bills announcing, 'A large amount of property to be sold by auction, at the price of old materials; inquire of —,' &c. And in token of the latter fact a piece of carpet was hung from the eminence whence King Lear saw so much, and gave a regular 'sold up' appearance to the place. It was a sad sight for those accustomed to think respectfully of their native land; but the rain and the mist gave such dismal sensations to the observers as to destroy any sentiment remaining in the seat of their affections. The little incident referred to occurred just before the departure of the fleet. It was the appearance of a man in an evening suit of black with long light hair, who stood gesticulating on the shore, and calling aloud that he wanted to see the Queen. It was the reporter of the 'New York Herald,' arrived once more on a mission to her Majesty to press for an answer on the subject of Ireland.

The answer was soon conveyed,

through the medium of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who landed for the purpose. England had nothing more to do with Ireland, and America was at liberty to derive any benefit she pleased from that arrangement; if America could do anything for the climate of the islands generally the islands would be much obliged. This was all the 'interviewing' that the reporter got from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; but we may be sure that he made the most of it.

Meanwhile the fleet had weighed anchor and had accomplished the least pleasant part of any voyage—the leaving of the land.

* * * * *

'The isle is now all desolate and bare'—to use the language of an illustrious and much-maligned poet—but the effects sold well, and brought considerable capital to their owners in the South. The Irish Republic endured for exactly six weeks. It lasted so long as the principle that 'one man is as good as another' was observed; but when there came the inevitable addition, 'and a great deal better,' it broke up. Everybody, in short, wanted to be Dictator, and nobody would consent to be dictated to. It is now under a joint protectorate formed by America and France, which means a military occupation and a state of martial law. But we believe that the people like their bondage rather than otherwise; they have got rid of most of the landlords, a great proportion of the priests, and nobody is trying to 'ameliorate their condition.'

The British Empire in Australia is prospering beyond all expectation. Aloof from European politics, it is relieved from a great many diplomatic dilemmas and military mistakes. It holds its possessions, East and West, with more ease and security than heretofore, and therefore more to their benefit. The settling down in the new country was difficult at first; but the capital of Victoria—the appropriate colony for head-quarters—was wonderfully developed when the Queen arrived, and ever since it has been called London has flourished more than

ever. The public buildings that have been taken over are being re-erected with great success. Westminster Abbey is looking very well, with just a little restoration, and St. Paul's, not being so old, presents a far better appearance than it did, for it is thoroughly cleaned and is not choked up with houses. Against the clear blue sky, and in the open square, you would not know it again. The Houses of Parliament are just up, and it is said that their stone will not rot in the lovely climate of the fifth 'quarter' of the globe. Some changes have come over public men. Mr. Gladstone has renewed his youth, and goes about gaily in the lightest of costumes. Mr. Disraeli has renewed his youth also, and looks very well in the white garments to which his cosmopolitan nature inclined from the first, though the fashion in Australia is to be as English as possible in your attire. Mr. Lowe has exhausted worlds of taxation, and is now imagining new. His colonial experience gives him a great advantage over the other ministers, or did so at least in the beginning,

when he went about as if his foot was on his native heath and his name was Macgregor. The landowners, it is pleasant to know, are satisfied; their possessions are new, but they give to them the dignity of old heritage, and nobody dreams of calling them squatters. They have made themselves very popular, too, by a voluntary concession of tenant right which has just been passed into law.

The constitution, we should add, works well in the colony, which has become a kingdom. The English are satisfied, which is a great deal to be able to say, and the Maories give no trouble, even in New Zealand. I—let me drop the historian style of 'we'—am rejoiced at this sign of good spirit on the part of my new countrymen. I shall hear even better accounts, I dare say, when I rejoin them; but at present I am sitting upon a ruined arch of London Bridge—in the old London—musing upon the memories of the past. I am writing upon the spot also, which fact will, I hope, account for an occasional relaxation of my style from its accustomed dignity.

S. L. B.

THE BRITISH BABY.

WHAT a grand old institution is that of the British baby, although it is by no means an insular institution, but is supposed to have had its rise originally somewhere in Mesopotamia. Either the laughing or the weeping philosopher might do a great deal of business with the British baby. The old Thracian philosophers used to cry when they were born and to laugh when they died; but we Christian islanders may blend our smiles and tears. We laugh over it, we joke about it. There is something comic in the whole affair; but nevertheless there is a serious, more serious, most serious element of the case.

It is a blessed fact that the young British mother can only have one first baby. That first baby is her fetish. The quantity of things pur-

chased months and months beforehand for the unconscious Neogilus is beyond all conscience. The little limbs must be swathed in lawn, and the pillow consist of eider down. The ruling principle of the expenditure seems to be that everything should be as expensive as possible, and, so far as may be, entirely useless. Comes the doctor, sleek and smiling, watch in hand, and with the head of his 'perchloride of formile,' *vulgo* chloroform, emerging from the breast-pocket of his coat—thanks to Her Gracious Majesty, who has set her suffering sex the example of not suffering more than they are obliged. Comes the matron, sister, or cousin, who assumes the charge, wear the keys, secures the plate-basket, and makes her initiatory experiments in house-keeping. Paterfamilias sometimes

tries on the housekeeping, and, generally speaking, makes an utter mess of it. Comes Mrs. Gamp, with the inevitable umbrella and the prevailing taste for strong waters; but I protest against all nurses being included in the Gamp species, for some are kind, thoughtful, Christianly souls enough. Then the British baby lords it over all, unconscious of its sovereignty. The British father and husband is wholesomely awoke to a sense of his true insignificance. He has his base uses, in the low way of paying bills, and the British baby generally stands a man in a twenty-pound note, and is cheap at that. He is therefore still to be fed, though his nourishment is a minor point to that of the baby; but he may eat a chop on the staircase or take a cut at the cold mutton on the sideboard. It is to be remarked, however, that this is the time for high revels below stairs, and exaggerated household bills in the kitchen, and almost the first use that the mistress makes of recovered health and strength is to deal out monthly warnings. Come the sympathising lady-friends and the good old souls who slip half-crowns into the nurse's hands to see the red monstrosity, as if it were some *lusus naturæ* from Cochin China. Comes the inevitable poke in the sensitive ribs, and the ferocious grasp of the hand, and the absurd allusion to your chances of a prize at the forthcoming baby-show. Comes a prevailing atmosphere of caudle, and a bit of basketwork done up with lace and spangles, called a *berceau*, and long voluminous robes and cloaks of a deep flaming colour. Come your friends and neighbours, making their inquiries, and dealing out their pasteboard, for which the good wife will deal out hers in return, with thanks for the honour of kind inquiries. And reposing in state in the midst, as if she had achieved some memorable action without parallel within living memory, is that good wife herself, having discharged a duty to the state, or rather, dropping levity, let us say with Keble's beautiful muse, that she—

'To the Great Father lifts her pale glad eye,
Like a reviving flower when storms are hushed
on high.'

That wonderful British baby! But as I said before, it so fortunately happens that every baby cannot be the first baby. But it is a singular matter of fact that the first baby has always got such fine eyes, and dimpled cheek, and is the very image of his father, and has such an intellectual forehead. All babies are so pretty that it becomes an astonishment how men and women should ever grow up ugly. As the babies come on fast, perhaps the mother reluctantly acknowledges that every egg is not a swan's egg. Perhaps, good soul, she also admits that endless fineries are not absolute necessities for the baby. And I am bound to admit that women are very good to each other at these times, and manifest an immense lot of sincere sympathy. One will take off the other children, who, hearing they have got a new brother, insist that he shall come down and play at skipping-rope with them; and another will send all manner of coloured, worked shoes; and another will insist on providing beef-tea or calves'-foot jelly after her own peculiar recipe; and another will take her book and her work and sit beside the invalid for hours; and another will send grapes and flowers, and so on through the whole gamut of kind neighbourly offices.

Then the British baby has to be registered and christened, and as the unsympathising law exacts a fine in case of non-registration the latter point is of importance. The church registers were kept so badly that the State insisted on having a registration of its own. Those who care more for Church than State make the parson note the date of birth—an entry which gives them a double legal note of birth. The choosing of names, the choosing of godfathers and godmothers, are difficulties that encompass the unconscious babe. The business of sponsorship is a very serious matter. It is simplified by the rule that permits parents to be sponsors; but for all that, parents generally prefer

the three sponsors among outsiders. It is a difficult thing to ask people. The modern idea that has encrusted the ecclesiastical idea is, that the godfather should present a silver mug, or knife, fork, or spoon, or something of that kind, and sponsorship becomes a serious tax on one's benevolence. I once told a lady that her godchildren had no pecuniary claim upon her, on the strength of which she knocked them out of her will. It would be much better if it were understood all round that nothing of the kind was either expected or desired; that you may make presents *quâ* friend or *quâ* relative, but not *quâ* sponsor. Then you have no right to give a girl an ugly name. She will always resent it. Shakespeare was an intensely sensible man, but he made a great mistake when he argued that there was nothing in a name, or rather he smiled when he put such nonsense on pretty Juliet's lips. There are many persons to whom many plain names have a directly repellent effect. There are certain names to which some people, perhaps from some vague associations, can never take kindly. There are some which I cannot bear myself. The British *Paterfamilias* generally respects the memory of his great-aunt and grandmother, and is willing enough to call her Susan or Jane. But the mother is rather like the Vicar of Wakefield's wife, who read novels when she was laid up and selected the fine name of the heroine.

But as for the baby, whatever rudimentary arts he may develop, as, for instance, the art of suction, he does not show the slightest possible glimpse of the development of a moral sense. His notions of sleep are simply inordinate. His times for awakening are the small hours, when all conscientious babies are asleep. He then displays a capacity for yelling, which otherwise could hardly be expected from so minute an insect. At other times he reclines, sucking his thumb in dim yearning after a pipe, or doubling his fist in lively anticipation of life's coming struggles. A baby is generally born looking ex-

tremely old. One almost begins to speculate whether the Platonic theory of reminiscence may not be true, and whether this alleged baby may not be some extremely old gentleman who has acted rather badly in another sphere of existence, and has had another mundane chance given him. Babies look awfully old and wrinkled when they are born; sometimes they look ninety, but I have seen them look as young as eight-and-forty. In a few days' time they shake off the old existence, if they have had an old existence, and are fairly embarked upon this real sea of human life, where they will have rocks and shoals and quicksands enough before they can come into any sort of haven. You may become as philosophical as ever you choose over a baby. A foal or a puppy would scorn to be so helpless, and yet some of our philosophers think that, in the course of Darwinian development, the first baby was evolved, and managed to grow up somehow or other. A jury of monthly nurses would tell you that it is simply impossible that a baby should shift for itself; and I think the old monthlies would probably be more correct than the philosophers. I like it better that Mother Eve should take care of her firstborn, and even be consoled for the vanished glories of the lost Paradise.

And yet there is something maddening about a baby. Boswell is reported to have once said to Dr. Johnson, 'Sir, what could you do if you were shut up alone in a tower with a baby?' I forget what the response was. 'Sir, you are a fool,' I should suppose, or something equally laconic and straightforward. The suggestion is an awful one, probably an impossible one; but still the dread idea recurs—'What would a man do if he were shut up alone with a big baby?' Charles Lamb held strong opinions on the subject of babies. When the young children came in, as he considered, to spoil the dessert, he forthwith proposed the health of the much calumniated King Herod. And yet there are many pleasant

things to be said about babies, and you will find them said by poets, philosophers, and essayists all over the world; and it is especially noticeable how men of genius, when themselves childless, cling with most wonderful love and intelligence to the babies. But if you would know of what an extent of adoration the British babe is susceptible, you would have to dive fathoms down into the deep maternal heart. How it prizes and doats upon the baby, and almost worships it, and would sacrifice dear life for the child. Pa-

terfamilias considers it an 'anxious little blessing,' as one worthy man once said to me; or perhaps he goes his daily way without thinking much of the new-found treasure, or because he agrees with the friend who condoles with him because he 'has had another misfortune;' but that, at least, is not the opinion of the mother, nor yet perhaps of the angel assigned to watch over the babe.

I entreat the reader to lay down these pages gently, lest he should disturb my British baby.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

MR. DISRAELI'S 'LOTHAIR.'

THERE can be no doubt but Mr. Disraeli has given us a truly remarkable work. It is said, not untruly we believe, that he solaced the peculiar cares of all that this country knows of supreme power by reverting to those literary pursuits in which he won the laurels of twenty years ago. But the well-wishers of Mr. Disraeli—and they count more largely than the largest political majority against him—may have felt a little nervous when a man who has been Prime Minister descends once more into the literary arena. Beyond any Lothair, or Lothario, or hero that can be devised, Mr. Disraeli himself must be the hero of any novel that Mr. Disraeli writes. No hero that imagination could possibly invent could bring before us a career so brilliant, so remarkable, so fraught with intellectual interest as Mr. Disraeli's career. A hero may be chosen, as Mr. Disraeli is apt to choose his heroes, from dukes and princes and millionaires, who have at their command every imaginable resource of art and wealth, but in reality they all pale before that impressive intellectual grandeur which belongs to the historical fame of this veteran statesman. It is impossible, whatever the amount of effort to insure the

end, that Mr. Disraeli could write a thousand pages without revealing the manner of man he is in the years of parliamentary conflict and power, and without giving us many carefully thought out views of contemporary history and life. The anxiety arose whether so great a statesman might not suffer by either of two alternatives—whether he might not, as a mere novelist, give us something unworthy of his great position in the country, or, on the other hand, with the pretence of giving us a story, have given us matter which would best take the form of speech or pamphlet. Any such apprehensions may be safely dismissed. Mr. Disraeli has been true to his literary art. He has given us a novel which may be called a perfect novel in dialogue, in incident, in description, in light and shadow and colour. He has, in a consummate way, vindicated his title, beyond all other titles, to be a man of letters, a greater Addison, a happier Montagu. 'Lothair' is a great novel, but it is a novel that could only have been written by a great gentleman and a great genius.

It would be quite superfluous in us to give any account of a plot which is quite familiar to the country and of personages which are

already the best-known people of the season. There is necessarily a great deal of gossip in society about the personages of the tale, and not unnaturally so, as Mr. Disraeli has the dangerous arts both of portraiture and caricature; and in his trio of political novels—'Coningsby,' 'Sybil,' 'Tancred'—there have been many portraits which have since been avowedly accepted as portraits. Mr. Disraeli would find himself utterly unable to divest himself of his daring habit of delineating his social surroundings. He has not given us any distinct portraits, but he has largely and boldly transferred to his portraits various incidents and touches of character, and this photographic style cannot be misunderstood. No doubt Lothair himself, to a certain degree, is parallel with Lord Bute; the rejoicings in Scotland and England, on a scale which dwarfed the vaunted reception of the Sultan, are the same in fact as in fiction. The Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, with their family, seem represented in the duke and duchess of the story; Professor Goldwin Smith, the 'wild man,' as Mr. Disraeli once called him, is distinctly reproduced; Mr. Glynn, the whip, is imported bodily into these pages; we seem to catch views of the Bishop of Winchester, and of such men as Wiseman, Manning, and Antonelli; but Mr. Disraeli so ingeniously dovetails incidents, so mixes up in his fictitious characters things that would be irreconcilable in his real characters, that a direct identification appears to be impossible. We come to real historical ground when we see that Irish legislation is woven into the story, and that the very plot and substance of the story is laid on Italian ground, in the events preceding and following the day of Mentana. Even the Fenian movement in London is skilfully worked into the tale. Considering that Mr. Disraeli was a cabinet minister and a prime minister during these events, we certainly perceive that he has imposed no reticence upon himself. It may probably be that this free handling of matters with which he was officially

concerned may subject him to much criticism. It is much more to the purpose to say that his delineation of the Jesuit wiles to win over an illustrious convert, their compassing of sea and land to make one proselyte, must be extremely displeasing to the Roman Catholic interest, and is perhaps a sort of revenge for the failure of Roman Catholic votes.

The dialogue is always sparkling. When the interlocutors cease to sparkle they cease to talk. There are a crowd of people brought upon the stage, whose characters are cleverly indicated, whose talk is eminently characteristic, and who disappear almost immediately, having enlivened the story and helped its action. The thoroughly English character of St. Aldegonde is carefully worked out, with his whimsical British complaints. 'What I want in November is a slice of cod and a beefsteak, and by Jove I never could get them: I was obliged to come to town. It is no joke to have to travel three hundred miles for a slice of cod and a beefsteak.' It is an example of Mr. Disraeli's freedom that he makes Bertram say to the hero, 'I will take you to the smoking-room and introduce you to Bright, and we will trot him out on primogeniture.' Here is a remark which has as much truth as banter: 'Threescore and ten at the present day is the period of romantic passion. As for our enamoured sexagenarians they avenge the theories of our cold-hearted youth.' 'Lord and Lady Clonmore, so good-looking and agreeable that they were as good at a dinner-party as a couple of first-rate entrées.' Talking of dinner, we may observe that Mr. Disraeli is apparently very fond of ortolans. In one of his earlier novels he expresses an aspiration that he might die eating ortolans to the sound of solemn music; and in the present work ortolans crop up on several occasions. The character of Mr. Phœbus, the greatest of painters and lord of an Ægean isle, is wonderfully represented. Mr. Phœbus has an original theory on the subject of public instruction and primary schools. He 'does not interfere with them, but he regrets

their existence. He looks upon reading and writing as very injurious to education.' He therefore peculiarly admires the English aristocracy as being essentially Hellenic—'excelling in athletic sports, speaking no other language than their own, and never reading.' Here is another sublime touch, also not without a basis: 'The high mode now for a real swell is to have a theatre; Brecon has the Frolio; Kate Simmons is his manager, who calls herself Athalie de Montfort. You ought to have a theatre, Lothair; and if there is not one to hire you should build one. Several of our greatest swells have theatres and are married. In fact a first-rate man should have everything, and therefore he ought to have both a theatre and a wife.' Lothair, the hero, is a kind of representative man. He is a sort of a Lothario. Before the story is thirty pages old he quietly says to the Duchess, while taking a stroll on an early day of their acquaintance, 'I would ask your Grace's permission to offer my hand to your daughter.' The Duchess parries the question with maternal adroitness. Whereupon Lothair has a very grand affection for a heroine who is a Garibaldian, and a Platonic affection for a saint who is on the side of the Papalini. We therefore greatly admire the cool effrontery with which he turns to his first love at the last, and, unabashed by any consciousness of the awful lies he is telling, makes the unblushing avowal, 'I have committed many mistakes, doubtless many follies; have formed many opinions and have changed many opinions; but to one I have been constant, in one I am unchanged, and that is my adoring love for you.' We expect that Lothair will be very successful in a parliamentary career.

But we have as yet given no notice of the seriousness and thoughtfulness of Mr. Disraeli's work, which is marked with reverence, and, we regret to say, with some little irreverence as well. More beautifully finished descriptions of Rome and of Jerusalem we have nowhere seen;

riper sentences from long experience we have never read. Mr. Disraeli does not shrink from discussing the gravest matters; his mind has evidently been busy on the scientific and religious controversy; and whether he touches them lightly or deeply he does so with evident sincerity. It is impossible to read his work without recognising his individuality on every page; and while we do so every feeling of political sympathy, or even of political antagonism, yield to those of admiration, and even warmer feelings than admiration.

INTRODUCTIONS.

Among the curiosities of civilisation you will, after all, rarely find anything more curious than an introduction. A few cabalistic words, a bow, an upraised hat, and the *chevaux de frise* of English reserve utterly melts away. Now I am not going to rail against English etiquette and reserve. The longer I live the more sense and reason do I discover in the rules of etiquette. Such rules are the epitomised results of long and complicated experiences. But they are especially rules which society has devised for the protection of its weaker members; and the stronger members of society may hold them in solution, and apply them or not apply them according to the merits or exigencies of each case as it may arise. There is, I think, in the present generation, a tendency to escape from the narrowness of the mere letter, whether in the written law or in the still more powerful unwritten law of etiquette, to the freedom of the intention. An Oxonian will no longer adjust his glass in his eye, and regret that he cannot pull a fellow out of a hole in the Chervell because he had never had the honour of being introduced to him. And men who know each other perfectly by sight or repute have been known to pass each other without a word in the Via Mala or on the Pyramids. People are not so stiff and narrow now. 'But,' I said, oracularly, raising my voice, to my friend Mr. Harry Bobus, 'I hope never to live to see

the day when the good rules of English society will be exchanged for continental laxity.' 'Confound your impudence, Mr. P. P.' returned Harry Bobus, a youth of an irreverent frame of mind, 'what do you mean by talking about society? I'm society.' It was a sublime announcement. *L'état c'est moi* had been the parallel declaration of Louis Quatorze. We were on the pier at Boulogne. I was tired of the boulevards and was recruiting with a little sea-bathing; and two or three days after my arrival Bobus broke in upon me at my hotel. I gave him such of my company as I could spare from the writing of these immortal papers. Just at this moment the Maravillier girls passed me. They were pleased to salute me with a very gracious smile, I suppose on the strength of my great-aunt having been a Maravillier. 'What awfully swell girls!' said Bobus—he has never been able to shake off the absurd slang which he picked up during his very temporary sojourn at Oxford—'I have seen them a dozen times in the grounds of the Etablissement, and have wondered so much who they are. I wish you would give me an introduction.' I discovered afterwards that Harry Bobus had been 'loafing about after them'—I use his own coarse term, for which and for the confession I equally reproved him—and his existence had been scornfully ignored. I confess that I hesitated. I wonder whether that elderly Miss Maravillier would thank me for introducing a mere detrimental to her nieces. Bobus had been plucked at college. I had no doubt but all through life his destiny would be to get plucked in one way or another. He was well dressed and good-looking, and had plenty of small-talk, but was not well off either for cash or cleverness. But I thought that the lad would be dull since I could give him so little of my company, and the girls would be pleased to have a good-humoured fellow to fetch and carry for them; and it would be only a passing acquaintance, for I meant to take Bobus back with me; and Miss Maravillier would never disapprove of anything I did; and

I have got a morbid weakness in the way of obliging people. So the words were said, the 'Open Sesame' uttered, the hat upraised; and ever since that moment Bobus has entirely dropped me; and morning after morning on the sands and pier, evening after evening in the glittering halls of the Etablissement, he was escorting them about. Refusing my word of command to return to England, he allowed me to go home alone, saluting me a little patronisingly, a little ironically, as the boat glided close by them on the pier, as if the Maravillier connection belonged to him rather than to me. I have since heard that he is engaged to marry Kate Maravillier, say in about seven years' time; and I shrewdly suspect that my name has disappeared out of that little codicil to old Miss Maravillier's will, either to show her indignation at the unwise introduction or to augment the limited resources of friend Harry Bobus.

But I am a philosopher, and I have been set philosophising on the general subject of introductions. My first feeling naturally is that one cannot be too cautious about them; but then I recollect the wise saying of a good man, that after all prudence is a rascally virtue. What one has to say respecting a personal introduction is doubly true in the case of a letter of introduction. A letter of introduction is virtually a sort of letter of credit. You are A, we will suppose, and you assure B that C will be kind to him, and you assure C that B will be worthy of his kindness. It assumes, in fact, that we are all three well-regulated letters of the alphabet. A letter of introduction is, to me at least, a very sacred thing. It is an appeal both to one's good faith and sense of honour, and also to one's generosity and hospitality. As a rule, you can rarely bestow favours on those who have showed kindness to you: you can only repay it by showing kindness to others, and so expand the ever-widening circle of mutual good offices. Consequently, I rarely feel at liberty to refuse, and never at liberty to ignore, a letter of introduction. And there are only

a certain sort of people, and a certain time of life in which these will be of essential service. A time comes at which, upon the whole, you had rather not increase the number of your acquaintance. Your tastes are formed, your habits fixed, your friendships made, and you do not much care to advance by a hair's breadth beyond your wonted groove. I need hardly say that I should look upon such symptoms as symptoms of mental decrepitude, and should jealously guard against their encroachments. But still they are feelings which consciously or unconsciously govern the minds of a large proportion of mankind. It is in the fresh morning of life, when a man is commencing his career, whether he is striking out into the great world of politics, or is following a humbler, and, in comparison, a more secluded path at a fixed locality, in one of the learned professions, that the great worth of good introductions comes into play. It is not too much to say that the introductions given at this period lend a decided tinge to all the future colour of one's life. There are certain persons by whom, almost to the last, introductions are assiduously sought as essential elements to their success in life. It frequently happens that the lawyer, the doctor, the schoolmaster, considers each additional introduction as an additional step in the extension of their connection; and extension of connection is the single condition of progress and professional advancement.

I cannot but think that if some of the restrictions of society were construed in a more liberal spirit there would be more 'sweetness' and 'light' in the world, and it would be a more graceful and a happier world to live in. I imagine that they do these things better on the Continent and in the United States. I have heard of a clergyman who travelled all over the States, and was received everywhere with boundless hospitality, with no other credentials than a commendatory letter from an English bishop commending him to the kindness of all Christian people. Much of this

kindness is shown to visitors at a Church Congress, or a meeting of the British Association. Your own friends are probably quite full, but you find yourself billeted on some worthy family, who admit you into kind and sudden intimacy and treat you with unbounded benignity and hospitality. It is well known that when public men are on a tour for some religious or political purpose, they are conveyed from house to house, and their line of travel represents something like a triumphal progress. Might not something of this kind be done in a more limited and private way? For instance, if you are making a long pedestrian tour over a lonely line of country, why should you sit down in a knoll of the turf for your sandwiches? or, if a heavy rain comes on, why should you only resort to a cottage or a public-house? or, if you have missed the train at a little station and must wait for hours before another train comes, why should you consume your time and yourself by stamping up and down within that air-swept shed? Why should you not at once resort to the residence of the squire or the parson, briefly mention your mischance, and be assured of courtesy, rest, and refreshment? You need no introduction: the mischance itself is an introduction. I can imagine no chance more grateful than finding a stranger with simple faith appealing to my sense of courtesy and brotherhood. He shall partake of my tankard and sit among my books; and he shall either have my humble converse or partake of that better silent converse solid books will give him as he lounges on restful sofa or in arm-chair. I may be 'entertaining angels unawares,' or my poor blessing shall return into my own bosom. The misfortune is that one hardly ever gets the chance of doing a simple act of kindness. The selfish and conventional type of our age has been destructive of anything of the kind. A man would not run the chance of being stared at, and would think it a decided 'grind' to have to make any explanatory remarks. Moreover, a man would probably think it a great bore to

have to make himself agreeable at a great house; he would prefer to be alone that he may cogitate or read. No thinking man ought to be annoyed at being obliged to take refuge in a cottage for an indefinite time, or to spend some hours at a small station. Probably he has got his writing-case with him, and if he has not got his book, he has his thoughts. Some of the hardest work I have ever done has been wrought under such untoward circumstances. But I believe I have a knack of coming out strong under creditable circumstances. I nearly worked through the *Ethics* of Aristotle in an omnibus, but then the study of the great founder of the peripatetic philosophy came, I suppose, naturally easy to the Peripatetic.

I have met with persons who have told me that they considered introductions to be altogether supererogatory. They are so confident in their station, character, and address, so perfectly assured that they are able to win their way whenever they choose to do so—and not without valid reasons also—that they hold that introductions are altogether a relic of a vanished ceremonial. Theodore Hook used to say this sort of thing; and there may be people who think it necessary to make the acquaintance of those to whom they cannot obtain an immediate formal introduction. I have often noticed this eccentricity on the part of worthy people, and I can only explain it on the theory of some vague, ill-regulated yearning for sympathy, or on the theory of romantic nonsense of which neither they nor ourselves could give any rational account. But when Haroun Alraschid went about in disguise, and was obliged, when he got himself into circumstances of difficulty, to own himself Haroun Alraschid, he was not always believed to be the Caliph. And a conventional world will hardly credit that a man is a man of sense and status when he does anything opposed to the conventional ideas of their great social requisites. The general impression on the subject of introductions is that we should be both more careful and more liberal in the

matter. A fresh acquaintance is often like fresh air. It liberates the fixed atmosphere, and lets in the helpful ozone that purifies and quickens social life. We would desire that an ampler and freer circulation of these social notes should pass current in the world. Especially in the case of young men beginning their life in London, I would earnestly inculcate the necessity of some thoughtfulness and generosity. At the same time there ought to be much more care and forethought than is often the case with these social instruments. No man has a right to sow his introductions broadcast, inflicting a certain amount of annoyance and inconvenience, when unworthy demands are made upon your good offices, and discrediting an institution which ought to be scrupulously and jealously maintained—the institution which is twice blessed, in conferring hospitality on the stranger, and honour on the absent friend who introduces him.

THE LETTERS OF SIR G. C. LEWIS
AND OF SIR CHARLES BELL.*

The letters of Sir G. C. Lewis and of Sir Charles Bell are certainly books which ought to be bracketed together. At the first view there are many points of contact and similarity. Each possessed great eminence in his own walk of life; each had a scientific order of mind; each wrote letters well worthy of preservation at a time when letters had not degenerated, through the penny postage, into mere messages; each had an able and affectionate brother to whom the world is indebted for these memorial pages; each had that same initial title, whatever its value may happen to be; each was prematurely cut off by sudden acute illness. There are here certainly a crowd of similarities. But although the parallel is more complete than that between

* Letters of the Right Hon. Sir George Cornwall Lewis, Bart., to Various Friends. Edited by his Brother, the Rev. F. G. Lewis. Longmans.

'Letters of Sir Charles Bell, Selected from his Correspondence.' Murray.

Macedon and Monmouth, there is also a wonderful difference between the two types of moral and intellectual excellence presented to us in these contemporaneous volumes of mixed biography and autobiography. Let us just glance at the primary impressions left behind by these life-like and instructive books.

Sir George Cornwall Lewis had a mind absolutely dominated by the love of knowledge. His supreme happiness was to be reading and writing; and he tells us that his method was to read when he had plenty of time and to write when he had only scraps of time. His was the celebrated apothegm, that life would be very tolerable save for its amusements. The meeting of Parliament was 'abominable,' to become a Cabinet minister was a bore. He was a student after the fashion of the great students of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The attitude of his mind was always that of critical inquiry. He saw through the 'dry light' of philosophy, and he saw far whatever way he looked. His mind always took the negative side by a kind of instinct. With lynx-like cleverness he discerned when a controversialist had not proved his case; but the flaw in his mental constitution was that he proceeded to conclude that the unproved case would never be proved. He was content that Niebuhr and Arnold should pull down the fanciful structures of early Latin history, but he declined to endorse any of their reconstructions. Perhaps the only thing that could seriously annoy him was the declared belief that a man could live to a hundred. His hard intellect was singularly lucid and passionless, undimmed by a prejudice or a sympathy. His leading aims were to verify or to contradict. His intense industry, acuteness, sense, and integrity commanded for him a degree of respect hardly paralleled in political and literary circles. But he gives us the impression that while his intellect was developed to the utmost point of human development, the other faculties, which require equal development for the unity and balance of human nature,

were somewhat starved. His most human and redeeming feature was that he was always capable of a hearty laugh. Sir John Pakington said the other night in the House of Commons that the cares of the War Office had killed Sir George Lewis and other war ministers. But it was when he was Secretary-at-War that he composed his Latin disquisition on 'Hey-diddle-diddle,' almost his solitary joke, which would make us imagine that these cares were not overwhelming. His familiar letters showed as much erudition as his familiar wit. He writes a book on the 'Astronomy of the Ancients,' and then, in a letter to his brother, he discusses the gardens of the 'Ancients.' He explains that they were not gardens at all, but only shrubberies with bits of statuary about them. The 'Ancients'—those repellent, strange-garbed people—were to him as real as the 'moderns' who elbowed him in the lobby of the House of Commons. He discusses the matter of yesterday with the same philosophic calmness and detail as the matter of two thousand years ago, and the matter of two thousand years ago with the same carefulness and anxiety for accuracy as if it ruled the living interests of to-day. Yet his stupendous attainments did not save him from an average crop of blunders. He believed that the Crimean war would never result in a peace. He believed that the American war would not terminate in a disruption. Perhaps he was equally mistaken, demonstrably mistaken, when he disbelieved in centenarianism, and utterly denied that there was any interpretation of the cuneiform inscriptions. Intense caution and incredulity, perhaps, after all, are not the best intellectual instruments. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has left no mark in our history. The editor of the 'Edinburgh Review' has left no mark in our literature. One of the oddest things about him is that he could not understand the popularity of Dickens and Macaulay. It is not difficult to detect the thousand faults, which, as Oliver Goldsmith said, might be proved to be as

many beauties, in these great writers. But not to appreciate the reasons of that popularity indicates a certain intellectual barrenness and deficiency of sympathy. As we look at his stupendous attainments we are reminded of the corded strands of an athlete's arm. The strength is prodigious, but the man may not be very strong. Muscular force is one thing, and vital force is a different thing. We have always greatly respected the character of Sir G. C. Lewis—the effect of this biography is to heighten that respect—but we are unable to see that he was a great statesman, a great writer, or even a great man.

Sir Charles Bell is of a different order of men, more lovable, and without a certain kind of stateliness possessed by Sir George Lewis. Lewis considered men in broad masses, historically, politically, sociologically even; Bell was probably capable of doing the same, but he rather looked upon men with an intense human individual interest. With him the feelings of the poet and the painter are always struggling for expression. He had that tenderness and imaginativeness which are not uncommon with men of profoundly scientific thought, such as Buffon and Faraday. He came up from Edinburgh to London, with great talent and with the reputation for great talent, to try his fortune; and after many years he returned to Edinburgh once more, as Professor in his University, the post, which, to his modest ambition, seemed highest and most honourable of all posts. He took a big, dark, dilapidated house in Soho Square, which once belonged to Speaker Onslow, whither he consigned his museum, his house pupils, his kinsmen, and his servants, and with all his energies went in for that great London practice in which large sums are earned and expended. During all these years in London he corresponded almost daily with his brother in language of frankness and affection which it is difficult to read wholly unmoved. Even in the London streets and squares, where once he delighted to lose himself, observing all the details of the mo-

notonous life around him, he keenly noticed each aspect of natural things: 'Now, too, the foliage is cool and dark, the light breaks through the trees with silver splendour, and the distance is bright and enticing.' Unlike Sir George, he did not despise the rational amusements of life; the theatre, the opera, and the fine arts were for him enthusiastic relaxations. But his greatest delight, especially if he had been performing an operation, was to get away to country scenes and sounds. His way was made easy for him. Both men of science and men of letters gave him a warm and kindly appreciative reception. Abernethy, who always concealed kindness of heart under roughness of manner, was more than civil to him, and Sydney Smith wrote to Jeffrey: 'He is modest, amiable, and full of zeal and enterprise in his profession. I could not have conceived that anything could be so perfect and beautiful as his wax models.' It is a remarkable instance of his energy that directly he heard of the battle of Waterloo he started off to the field of action to enlarge his knowledge of gunshot wounds. His surgical instruments proved sufficient passport. The line he took up was the performance of capital surgical operations on the French prisoners. It is remarkable that almost simultaneously we have just had two new and most vivid accounts of the field of Waterloo. One of them is contained in the 'Letters of Sir C. Bell,' the other is in General Mercer's 'Journal of the Waterloo Campaign.' There is a considerable similarity in the two accounts. Each of them mentions the curious fact that the ground where the French lay seemed a sort of library: each French soldier carried with him into the field the little book, partly printed, which he was obliged to keep, containing a code of rules and his receipts for pay. He thought his French patients looked little better than mere banditti; 'there was a resentful, sullen rigidity of face, a firmness in their dark eyes as they lay half-covered in the sheets.' Mr. Lockhart, in the 'Life of Scott,' mentions that one of his letters had

the effect of causing Sir Walter to proceed to Waterloo, after which he published 'Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk.' His London professional success was crowned by being elected Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital, a distinction to his mind only second to the chair of Surgery at Edinburgh. In 1831 he was knighted, with a whole batch of scientific men, including Herschel and Brewster; 'My niece's dancing-master having acted the king the night before, I had no difficulty.'

There are some 'moments' of especial interest in the career of Sir Charles Bell. The greatest of these was unquestionably the promulgation of his discoveries in the nervous system. These, with the discoveries of Dr. Marshall Hall in the same direction, have been the greatest achievements of our age in this branch of medical investigation. It is claimed by his editor, on the great authority of Müller the physiologist, that his discoveries are as important as that of the circulation of the blood. His wife tells us how he placed sheets of paper one over the other to show how the nerves increased in complexity, by every superadded function, until, from the first necessary or original act, they came to the grand object of man's perfection in voice and expression. An account of his discoveries in the nervous system is now contained in the later editions of his *Bridgewater Treatise*. The writing of this *Treatise*, 'On the Hand,' was another epoch in Bell's career. The result was that his mind was thoroughly saturated with the argument for design. It overflowed in his conversations, his letters, his addresses to the British Association. Once he said that he should like to show men of science how God Almighty made ropes and arches and other things which they attempted to do. In 'The Hand' he concludes: 'Reasons accumulate at every step for a higher estimate of the living soul, and give us assurance that its condition is the final object and end of all this machinery and of their successive revolutions.' We doubt not but Sir Charles Bell would have added that there were at least two other

epochs in his life of tremendous importance to himself—the time when he got married and the time when he commenced fly-fisher. The wife was the sister of his brother's wife, and it is touching to see how intensely he lived in the affections of the family group around him. We would willingly have some more of his letters to his wife both before and after marriage. 'I see a God in everything, my love,' he writes to his *fiancée*; 'it is the habit of my mind. Do you think I could have been employed as I have been without contemplating the Architect? There I am an enthusiast.' After his marriage he quotes to his wife Lucy Hutchison's account of her Colonel, 'which would make a true history of more handsome management of love than the best romancers describe,' and adds: 'Is not this true of all married folk of any soul?' He took to fly-fishing because he felt his intense need of the country; and when he was in the country he felt the need of some object to occupy his mind. Thus he gleefully writes: 'I have got an order for Lord Cowper's water at Panshanger, which is a sweet valley with a pretty running water. The trout are as large as young salmon, and give me great sport. These English parks are, as you well know, the great ornaments of England. They afford solitude and picturesque beauties. We make our temporary home in some adjoining village inn. These inns have every comfort in a small way. Without these little expeditions I am quite certain that I could not live in London.' Sir Charles had found out at least one simple secret of happiness. We can very well understand how, when he had written anything particularly good in his book 'On the Hand,' it was after a day's quiet fishing. 'That varying darkness of the brown rushing waters, the pools, the rocks, the fantastic trees—go round the world you shall not see these unless you have a fishing-rod in your hand.' He enjoyed his fishing to perfection when he got back to Scotland, and especially when he could go fishing with Christopher North. Nor did Professor Wilson forget to comme-

morate him in 'Blackwood.' 'Now for a fish. Let's show the heaviest salmon in the Tweed. Would that Sir Charles Bell were here, who excels in all that he tries—artist, anatomist, angler of the first water—that we might yield to him the precedence and see a fish taken in perfection.'

A good deal of solid quotation might be obtained from the Lewis correspondence, both respecting history and the history of literature. Correspondence with or respecting such people as Sir Edmund Head, Mr. Mill, Mr. and Mrs. Grote, and Mr. E. A. Freeman cannot fail to be intellectually instructive and stimulating. Indeed we will admit that the Lewis book is more intellectual than the Bell book, but Sir Charles Bell is both more readable and more quotable. As a compromise, Sir Charles shall give us two medical quotations respecting statesmen, as there is something of which the world was hardly aware, that, humanly speaking, the deaths of Canning and of Windham were preventable. 'What a world it is! Poor Canning has been lost by his own folly. May I not say so? When he last visited the king he was holding his handkerchief to his mouth: "What is the matter?" said Sir William Knighton. He said he was salivated. Knighton found him very ill, forced him to go home and to call his physician. They found inflammation of the chest far advanced.' To use medical language, he was lost by neglect, loss of time, and imprudence. Again he writes: 'You will perceive by the newspapers that they have succeeded in killing Windham. It is a pity to lose such a man at any time. They ought not to have operated on him, and so I told Lynn.' Windham had injured his hip by his exertions at a fire. A number of surgeons were called in, and we are elsewhere told—in the Windham correspondence—that there was a regular parliamentary division on the question of the operation, in which the 'ayes' fatally had it.

Sir George Cornewall Lewis had every outward advantage. He had the education of Eton and Christ

Church; he inherited a title and an estate. But he had the power of turning every advantage to a greater advantage, of making each talent ten. Even when forced to go abroad for his health, he made this a step in his mental and political training. Perhaps no poor scholar ever worked half so hard as he did, and consequently he took the highest honours in the University and society, in politics and literature. He thoroughly possessed and comprehended the English characteristics of straightforwardness and intelligibility, and thus he was even a greater favourite in the City, as Finance Minister, than Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli. He was weighted with that character which in English eyes fills a larger space than cleverness. That character and cleverness were equally possessed by Sir Charles Bell. But a man of science, though his claims may be intrinsically stronger, is rarely so much before the country as a Cabinet Minister, especially when that Cabinet Minister has been the editor of a great party review. But it is difficult to exaggerate the great good wrought by this great surgeon, Sir Charles Bell. He healed or alleviated suffering to an indefinitely great extent; he expanded the limits of medical knowledge; and in his Bridgewater Treatise he has made a valuable and lasting addition to the literature of science and natural theology. He has unconsciously left behind him one of the most winning portraits that have ever graced medical biography. We have no ability or desire to strike anything resembling a balance between such men as Sir George Lewis and Sir Charles Bell, but there is a moral on the surface of the history of each which may be given in the words of the poet of the 'Golden Year':

'But well I know

That unto him who works, and feels he works,
'This same grand year is ever at the doors.'

KELLY *versus* KELLY.

There has been such a succession of causes célèbres of late in our courts of judicature that the importance of the typical case of Kelly v. Kelly, the appeal on which was recently

disposed of, may have been obscured. Yet it was one of the most striking cases that has come before the court over which Lord Penzance presides, and which furnishes us with a perennial source of those ugly details concerning which his lordship attempted to construct some sort of philosophy in his summing-up of the Mordaunt case. He said, truly enough, that it was no man's taste for abominations—for any ordinary divorce case would yield such—which led to the publication of these cases, but special circumstances and interests connected with special cases. So far Lord Penzance, a little in the style of the leading article. We have certainly had at least two great cases which have overshadowed the importance of the humble suit to which we desire to draw attention. The Mordaunt case compromised imperial as well as Warwickshire interests; until the Prince's pleasant, innocent letters dispelled all illusions, the trial had a political importance, and threatened a serious blow to monarchical institutions. Had that other great cause, of *Dr. Williams v. the Duke and Duchess of Somerset*—a case in which an illustrious physician sustained an unparalleled injury, under circumstances which forbade vindictiveness—proceeded to determination, we should have had a case of hardly less intrinsic importance than the Mordaunt case. But let us get back to *Kelly v. Kelly*.

Mr. Kelly argued his own case, both in the first trial and in the appeal. He reminded us of the American orators, who keep the floor of the House day after day, and whose speeches are estimated by their constituents in proportion to their length. On the appeal, if we recollect rightly, counsel were not even called upon to respond to Mr. Kelly. Parsons can talk away in the pulpit without any fear of contradiction, but Mr. Kelly discovered that they could not do so in a law court. The judge made some very unpleasant and pungent remarks on the wrong-headed defendant. Yet the trial had an unusual peculiarity for that unsavoury

court. Both husband and wife told their plain story honestly, and there was no dispute about the facts, and the matter altogether turned on the construction to be assigned to the facts. The judge's doctrine of constructive cruelty is probably more open than he would admit to the imputation of being 'judge-made law;' but it is not so bad a circumstance that judges should make good law. The decision went far to place equity before technicalities. It distinctly recognised that moral torture was every whit as bad as physical violence. A hard-hearted man knows that any act of violence is as punishable by law as repudiated by public opinion. But he may show his hard-heartedness in ways compared with which such violence would be positive mercy. In these days of refinement we obtain refined methods of cruelty, and the heavy, lame foot of the law is now slowly limping onwards with refined principles of justice. No suffering woman need now wait till the cowardly blow is struck if she can prove cowardly acts of restraint, oppression, and intimidation. The whole case does great credit to Lord Penzance, who got into a regular literary swing in delivering his judgment. On his appeal, after Baron Channell had delivered his own opinion and that of his brother Hannen, the judge-ordinary 'thought it right' to wind up the case in language which restated his original judgment. 'The appellant affirms that a new law has been made to meet his case, and that it will form a dangerous precedent. I hope not. To the best of my judgment it is the case that is new, and not the law. I have searched the recorded decisions of the Matrimonial Courts in vain for a case the features of which in any considerable degree resemble the present. It has no parallel in the past, and as to becoming a precedent, it is hardly likely to find one in the future. So much injustice, so much perversion of mind, such abiding rancour for so trifling a cause, so much deliberate oppression under provocation so slight, moral chastisement so severe ad-

ministered with so much system, maintained with such tenacity up to the time of so perilous a danger to health, with so utter a disregard to consequences, and all to extort confession of acts, and firm repentance without consciousness of wrong, will probably never be exhibited again. That such a case should recur it would be necessary that to an inflexible will should be added the power of self-deception in an inordinate degree, so that the promptings of angry resentment should be mistaken for the voice of duty, and that while religion should be put forward to sanction, and even enjoin, a harsh and cruel retaliation, the leading precepts of religion, humility and forgiveness,

should be altogether forgotten or little heeded.' The case will be especially instructive to men who, in their immunity from coarse, positive sin, are blind to the harshness and mercilessness of their own character, and who, by a hypocritical subservience to public opinion, ordinarily escape the penalties of outraged society.

However, the common people have a homely proverb, to the effect that what is good for the goose is good for the gander. We wait to see whether the ingenious judge of the Probate Court will lay down some constructive cruelty on the part of the wife which shall be parallel, *mutatis mutandis*, to the case of the husband.

END OF VOL. XVII.

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